

**ENHANCING PROSPECTS OF LONGER-TERM SUSTAINABILITY  
OF CROSS-CULTURAL INSET INITIATIVES IN CHINA**

**Thesis submitted to the Moray House School of Education,  
University of Edinburgh, in fulfilment of the requirements  
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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**March 2005**



**I certify that this thesis has been written by me  
and is my own work.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Within the methodological and conceptual framework of recent research on educational change, an evaluative case study was undertaken to investigate factors affecting longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives in China. Four Sino-British initiatives were involved in the study, one of which was the main focus of the investigation, and the other three as supplementary sources of information. Fieldwork was conducted twice at two stages of the study for data gathering. The first was focused on the main initiative, and the second was on the three ancillary ones. Semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and documentation were utilised as major instruments to obtain information from a multiplicity of groups of stakeholders concerned. The findings that emerged from the study highlight seven intrinsic factors and six extrinsic factors as well as cultural adaptation as decisive to the longer-term sustainability of such initiatives. It was found that to enhance the prospects of sustainability of such initiatives, the interplay between the intrinsic and extrinsic factors would entail fulfilment of the roles and actions at micro, meso and macro levels, and communications and collaborations between them. Cultural integration arose as equally necessary to help the innovations to become well acclimatised to, firmly embedded in the local environment and evolve healthily and strongly, and further induce more fundamental changes. Finally, conceptual, methodological and practical implications were drawn from this study.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	Rationales for the present study	1
	Focus of the study	6
	Structure of the thesis	7
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW (1): CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>10</b>
	Introduction	10
	Rationales for CPD	10
	Perspectives on CPD	13
	Principles of effective CPD	19
	Implementation designs	23
	Problems and issues in INSET	26
	Concluding comments	38
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW (2): MAJOR ISSUES IN MANAGING CROSS- CULTURAL INSET INITIATIVES</b>	<b>40</b>
	Introduction	40
	Perspectives on change and longer-term sustainability	41
	Enhancing longer-term sustainability of INSET initiatives	56
	Conclusions	76
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>78</b>
	Research design and strategy	78
	Data collection	86
	Reflections on research design and data collection	100
	Data processing and analysis	105
	The presentation of findings	108
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>PERSPECTIVES OF PROJECT A COURSE PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME (1)</b>	<b>110</b>
	Trainers' and trainees' expectations of the programme	110
	Trainers' views about their benefits from working on the project	116
	Trainers' working experiences on the project	117

Course participants' views about the programme	119
Summaries of course participants' views about programme features	128
Trainers' views about impact of the project	131
<b>CHAPTER 6 PERSPECTIVES OF PROJECT A COURSE PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME (2)</b>	134
Trainers' perspectives about the programme	134
Trainees' perspectives about the programme	165
Summaries of trainers' and trainees' views about the programme	179
<b>CHAPTER 7 PERSPECTIVES OF PROJECT A EXPATRIATES AND ADMINISTRATORS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME</b>	184
Expatriates' perspective about the programme	184
Perspectives of university administrators in Project A about the programme	198
Perspectives of AEI administrators in Project A about the programme	203
Summaries of perspectives of three parties about the project's longer-term sustainability	207
<b>CHAPTER 8 FINDINGS FROM THREE COGNATE PROJECTS</b>	211
Views on project impact and longer-term sustainability	211
Summary of views of cognate project participants	224
<b>CHAPTER 9 DISCUSSION</b>	228
Introduction	228
Factors affecting longer-term sustainability	228
Measures for longer-term sustainability	240
Conceptual framework: decisive factors for longer-term sustainability	246
Concluding comments	256
<b>CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS</b>	258
Summary of substantive issues arising from the study	258
Implications	264
<b>REFERENCES</b>	273

## **APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>Data collection instruments for Project A at Phase 1</b>	<b>298</b>
	1.1 Questionnaire for the project team working on Project A	299
	1.2 Questionnaire for teachers taking part in Project A	306
	1.3 Interview schedule for Project A expatriates	311
	1.4 Interview schedule for local education management	313
	1.5 Interview schedule for Project A university administrators	315
	1.6 Interview schedule for Project A trainers	317
	1.7 Interview schedule for Project A ex-trainees	319
	1.8 Interview schedule for current Project A trainees	321
	1.9 Interview schedule for prospective Project A trainees	323
	1.10 Interview schedule for Project A AEI administrators	324
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>Interview schedule for Projects B, C and D at Phase 2</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>Summaries of stakeholders' views about intrinsic and extrinsic factors and cultural adaptation</b>	<b>327</b>

## TABLES AND FIGURES

### Tables

2.1	Models of CPD	26
3.1	Six approaches to innovation summarised by Lewin and Stuart	47
3.2	Summary of change strategies	50
4.1	The logic of four research strategies	84
4.2	Initial data collection schedule for Project A	89
4.3.1	Data collection in Phase 1	98
4.3.2	Interviews conducted in Phase 1	98
4.3.3	Questionnaires administered in Phase 1	98
4.3.4	Interviews conducted in Phase 2	99
4.3.5	Details of interviews conducted in Phase 2	99
5.1.1	Trainers' expectations of working on the programme	111
5.1.2	Extent of trainers' satisfaction with working on the programme	112
5.1.4	Full-time and part-time trainees' expectations of the ESP component of the programme	114
5.1.5	Interesting topics to full-time and part-time trainees	114
5.1.6	Extent to which full-time and part-time trainees' expectations were met	115
5.2	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about their areas of benefits from Project A programme	117
5.3	Trainers' working experiences on Project A	118
5.4.1	Trainers' opinions about features of Project A programme	122
5.4.2	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course design of Project A course	125
5.4.3	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about teaching methodology of Project A course	126
5.4.4	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course materials of Project A course	127
5.4.5	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course evaluations of Project A course	127
5.4.6	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about assessment of Project A course	128
5.4.7	Features where the differences between full-time trainees and part-time trainees were significant	130

5.5.1	Trainers' views about areas in which Project A has made an impact	131
5.5.2	Trainers' views about factors that have helped Project A make an impact	132
5.5.3	Trainers' views about areas in which Project A should make a greater impact than hitherto	132
5.5.4	Trainers' views about local factors that should be taken into account for Project A's longer-term sustainability	133
5.5.5	Trainers' views about steps that could be taken to enhance the impact of Project A and ensure longer-term sustainability	133

## Figures

5.1.3	Full-time and part-time trainees' expectations of Project A	113
5.2.1	Trainers' views about their benefits from the project	116
5.2.2	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about the benefits of Project A course	117
5.4.1	Trainers' opinions about the balance of course components of Project A programme	120
5.4.2	Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about the balance of course components of Project A programme	121
9.1	Interactions between three levels involved in cross-cultural INSET initiatives	244
9.2	Intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives	247
9.3	Interactions between three parties for longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives	248
9.4	Cultural transformation in implementing cross-cultural INSET and other initiatives	255
10	Exploiting internal and external efforts to enhance longer-term sustainability	263

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEI	Adult education institution
CLT	Communicative language teaching
CPD	Continuing professional development
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELP	English for legal purposes
ELT	English language teaching
ESP	English for specific purposes
INSET	In-service teacher training
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
TEFL	Teaching English as a foreign language

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the people who have contributed to the completion of this study. Thanks are extended to all my respondents back home in China and the British colleagues who were involved in the data gathering. This study would not have been possible without their generous support. I would also like to acknowledge the amount of support, encouragement and time which have been given throughout by my principal supervisor, Professor Dai Hounsell. Thanks also go to my second supervisor, Mr Gillies Haughton for his helpful and thoughtful comments on drafts of the thesis. Finally I must thank my husband and my son for their continuous support.



# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

This opening chapter aims to provide an overview of the present study. It consists of three sections. The first section provides rationales for the study. The second concerns research questions to be investigated; and the third presents the structure of the thesis.

### **Rationales for the Present Study**

The current study seeks to make contributions to the literature on and practice of teacher education with a focus on longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives. It is aimed at fulfilling four objectives.

#### **1. To explore determinants for success of CPD initiatives**

Historically in-service training has received very little attention. Most countries have put the emphasis of teacher education on initial teacher training (Davies and Preston, 2002). A change did not occur until three decades ago. Ever since in-service teacher training (INSET) or CPD of teachers has grown in importance and status and has developed as a global trend. CPD is aimed at inducing a move from a 'restricted' professional to an 'extended' one (Hoyle, 1980). It is interested in theory and current educational developments and to enable teachers to get involved in various professional activities and to further their own professional development through in-service work.

There exist accounts of not only successes, but also failures of CPD initiatives. Valuable experiences and insights have emerged which would contribute to the future practice of CPD. At the same time, a number of problems and issues have also arisen. From some observers' perspectives (e.g. Tisher and Wideen, 1990b), the

drawbacks have generated a pessimistic picture of teacher education. Fullan (1982) concluded that much of the research in the late 1960s and 1970s on attempts to implement innovation indicated that the initiatives undertaken sometimes failed to produce actual changes in practice. Cooley (1997) recently lamented that innovations 'tend to be highly visible at the surface, but do not affect what's going down in the lower depth'.

Likewise, Guskey (2000) contends that educators themselves frequently regard professional development as having little impact on their day-to-day responsibilities, which in turn has caused in some teachers apathy towards CPD. Some teachers doubtless even consider it a waste of their professional time. They may participate in professional development primarily because of contractual obligations. It is little wonder that when faced with budgetary constraints, one of the first items considered for reduction typically is funding for professional development.

This lacuna was also addressed by Doyle and Ponder as early as 1977. They observed that on the one hand, there was a voluminous collection of a prescriptive literature – strategies for educational innovation that purport to tell practitioners how to accomplish change in concrete school settings. On the other hand, there was a growing body of descriptive studies which indicated that the actual amount of change in schools fell significantly below expectations. They describe innovation projects as temporary systems within educational organisations, which create ecological demands of their own. Once the temporary system is withdrawn, behaviour patterns return to those which prevailed before the change project was initiated. All in all, the life histories of innovation projects are, more often than not, records of disappointment and failure. The innovation thus gradually fades.

Therefore, to ameliorate practices of CPD initiatives it is vital to understand the general reasons for the disparity between the substantial resources invested and the much less tangible returns and outcomes.

In addition to the drawbacks in the practices of CPD initiatives, there also exist limitations in the literature despite far-ranging research undertaken on teacher

education. Guskey (2000: 32) found that for decades researchers had tried unsuccessfully to determine the true impact of professional development in education. He observed that although in-service education and staff development endeavours in their various forms continue to be enormously popular and highly valuable, we still know relatively little about what difference they make. Some have surveyed the vast professional development literature to isolate salient factors (Massarella, 1980; Sparks, 1983). Others have analysed studies and reports to identify elements related to successful programme implementation (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978). Still others have used research summaries to offer guidelines for more effective practice (Showers et al, 1987; Wood and Thompson, 1983). Sometimes, the solutions posed by different researchers are contradictory. And even those that are clear are sometimes so general and theoretical in nature that they offer little help for practically minded educators who want specific answers and workable solutions. Definitive answers continue to be elusive.

Bascia and Hargreaves (2000: 20) noted that educational policymakers had failed to take on board the lessons of findings the research conducted, whose recurring theme has been the complexity (if not outright failure) of educational change and the inadequacy of so many reform ideas.

This scenario, in Guskey's view, stemmed from three reasons. The first one is confusion about the criteria of effectiveness of initiatives. This lack of agreement about the criteria of effectiveness makes it very difficult to compare results across studies.

A second reason Guskey proposed for limited progress in the search for the elements of effective professional development is that researchers usually look only for 'main effects'; that is, components or processes that are consistent across programmes and contexts. It aims to assess the effectiveness of an innovation by examining whether or not it has reached required standards on pre-specified criteria. They begin by gathering research studies and programme evaluations from the vast professional development literature. This list is narrowed by selecting only those that meet clearly

articulated selection criteria. Results are then 'standardised' and averaged across various programmes and contexts to obtain an estimate of the overall effect. This approach is artificial and restricted in scope and inadequate for elucidating the complex problem areas they confront (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972).

The third reason Guskey highlighted is that most researchers focus on issues of quantity and neglect important quality issues. Employing large samples in order to seek statistical generalisations tends to be insensitive to local perturbations and unusual effects (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972). It also has the tendency to overlook the diversity of perspectives concerned. It ignores the evolving nature of programmes.

The vacuum in the literature calls for in-depth studies of initiatives for teachers' CPD, instead of a snapshot of the situations. It demands scrutiny of the real-life contexts in a naturalistic manner. Ostensible features as well as less tangible characteristics merit investigation to obtain a realistic and full picture of the reality.

## 2. To raise an awareness of the importance of evaluation in CPD initiatives

Bell and Day (1991) have highlighted the urgency of starting evaluation as an integral part of innovations due to the discovery of the paucity of evaluation. Besides, research has been traditionally been researchers' or academics' job exclusively. There has been little involvement of teachers in the undertaking of evaluation. This has caused a series of disconcerting phenomena in research on teacher education, for instance, having inappropriate frames guiding their research (see Tisher and Wideen, 1990). Hence the part played by teachers on the ground in conducting evaluation (for example, Crossley and Holmes, 2001) is emphasised alongside outside evaluators to judge the relevance of in-service activities to the advancement of their professional effectiveness. Action research is endorsed as one of the effective modes that involve teachers in carrying out research.



### 3. To evaluate the project approach as an innovative methodology

There exists little research on the project approach in the literature despite the large numbers of ELT projects that have been completed since the 1970s. McGovern (1999) noted that only a few of the hundreds of project had been written up or even recorded as having happened at all. Of those that have been written up, few are analytical. Many are of the 'war stories and romances' variety. Of those that are analytical some have been written in such a way that only an ELT specialist can understand them. He suggested that this lack of documentation had proven professionally detrimental, both externally and internally. Externally it meant that some of the traditional sponsors of ELT aid projects had become somewhat more wary of a profession that did not monitor and develop its own project performance. Internally it meant that new project personnel had been unable to learn from past successes and failures. There are still no guidelines available as to what seemed to have worked and not worked in a variety of settings.

### 4. To make a contribution to the Chinese literature on teacher education

Although research in teacher education is on the increase globally (Tisher and Wideen, 1990), research undertaken by Chinese researchers on CPD initiatives in China is still underdeveloped. Li (2003) noted that research and theory building in teacher education in China had been much overlooked until recently, and had much to improve both in quality and quantity. He pinpointed two major problems. The first is a lack of an established body of theory regarding teacher education to inform the practice of teaching. Even today, there are not many people committed to research on teaching and teacher education in China. Regardless of suggestions from some researchers that teacher colleges should be engaged in research on educational theories and evaluation (Wu and Chang, 1990), the situation has remained by and large unchanged.

The second problem Li recognised concerns the quality of research and theory building in teacher education in China. To begin with, there is the problem of

imbalance between opinion papers and data-based studies. Among the existent studies that are small in number, there are far too many opinion papers compared with data-based studies. Lack of variety in research design is another problem. Survey research has emerged as the dominant source of information on Chinese society. Studies of other methodologies, especially qualitative studies, are still rare in China. Among these surveys, they can usually give a general estimate without clear indications as to how the figures are obtained to help assess their reliability. In interview studies, it is clear that informants are cautious about providing unreserved comments or criticisms about the nature of teacher education.

### **Focus of the Study**

The current study involves a web of interlocking factors. It intends to unravel and understand the major problems in cross-cultural CPD initiatives by examining four projects in the same region in China. It seeks to yield insights into factors influencing the longer-term sustainability of projects of this kind, which could, it is hoped, contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of such initiatives and enhancing the likelihood of success. In doing so, it also seeks to understand the perspectives of the variety of stakeholders that typified these projects. In essence, at an academic level as a research project, it primarily seeks to investigate underlying causes for successes and failures of CPD initiatives by means of a detailed study of one project and supplementary studies of three parallel projects in China. At a pragmatic level as a by-product of the research, it intends to uncover some critical areas to which all stakeholders must attend to help teacher education improve in ways that will make it possible to meet the challenges it faces. The research questions the study seeks to examine are as follows:

1. What are the major factors that facilitate longer-term sustainability of initiatives for CPD in China viewed from the perspectives of diverse groups of stakeholders, including trainers, trainees, institutional management, provincial/state education authorities and international agencies (where applicable)?

2. From the same diversity of perspectives what are the major factors that inhibit their longer-term sustainability?
3. What measures might be taken to enhance the prospects of longer-term sustainability for initiatives of this kind?

## **Structure of the Thesis**

Following on from this brief introduction, the review of relevant literature is presented in two separate chapters of this thesis, i.e. Chapters 2 and 3. They are intended to set the scene for the current research by a comprehensive but critical review of what has been undertaken in the fields of managing cross-cultural CPD initiatives. A number of major themes concerning longer-term sustainability of CPD initiatives are discussed. Chapter 2 includes rationales for CPD, existing perspectives on CPD, principles of effective CPD, implementation designs, problems and issues in INSET initiatives. Chapter 3 covers perspectives on change and longer-term sustainability, and measures that might be taken to enhance viability.

Chapter 4 concerns research design and methodology employed for this study. It introduces rationales for utilising case study as research design, deductive and abductive approaches as research strategy. One initiative (Project A) is examined in depth as the principal focus of investigation, and three cognate initiatives are looked at as supplementary sources of data. It then continues to introduce details of data collection, including data collection methods, data collection schedules, data collection instruments, pilot study and the execution of data collection. It is followed by reflections on research design and data collection. Finally, it presents the way in which data were analysed and findings were reported.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present findings from the core project (Project A). Chapter 5 presents questionnaire findings concerning Project A trainers' and trainees' views about the programme. It includes five sections: trainers' and trainees' expectations of the programme, their benefits from their experience on the course, trainers' working

experience on the project, trainers' and trainees' views on the programme features, and trainers' views on the impact the project has thus far achieved.

Chapter 6 deals with interview data collected from Project A trainers and trainees. It intends to be complementary to the questionnaire data by checking consistency between the two sources of findings, and by yielding supplementary information which was not revealed from the questionnaires. It covers trainers' and trainees' perspectives about their expectations and experiences on the project, the project impact and its longer-term sustainability.

Chapter 7 concerns findings on perspectives of Project A expatriates and administrators generated from interviews with them about their views on project goals, project impact and the prospect of longer-term sustainability.

Chapter 8, the fourth and final chapter on findings, is concerned with findings from three cognate projects, Projects B, C and D in the same geographical setting as Project A. Findings are discussed first that emerged from the three initiatives on project impact and longer-term sustainability. A summary of major findings from the three projects is then provided.

Chapter 9 begins with summarising and reviewing the findings. Factors affecting longer-term sustainability are discussed. Measures that might be taken to enhance the prospect of longer-term sustainability are presented. It then provides a conceptual framework generated from this study. It emphasises the importance of the interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that are influential for the longer-term sustainability of CPD initiatives in China. It suggests that success of CPD initiatives of this kind is to a great extent contingent upon the part played by the project team (intrinsic); and the level of external support (extrinsic) from the meso and macro local levels and support from international agencies. Cross-cultural communication and transformation is a recurrent and pervasive theme that permeates every aspect and every stage of the implementation process, i.e. in teaching, project management, perceptions and practices of CPD, etc.



Chapter 10 draws conclusions and implications from the present study with regard to longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives in China. It firstly presents a summary of findings, and then proceeds to discuss implications in three dimensions: conceptual, methodological and practical. Conceptually, the research highlights a number of decisive factors affecting the longer-term sustainability in this specific educational setting. It underscores the necessity of synchronising all levels and parties concerned and cultural adaptation and integration. Methodologically, it recognises case study as an appropriate means to explore and understand what was going on in the research setting. The application of multiple sources of information from as diverse a range of perspectives as possible is considered as enhancing the credibility and objectivity of the research. The research also draws useful implications for management of cross-cultural CPD initiatives, project management and language teaching.

We move now to Chapter 2, the review of recent research on management of CPD.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review (1)**

### **Continuing Professional Development**

#### **Introduction**

Over recent years, education systems in the majority of countries in the world have been characterised by continuous, rapid and multiple change (Craft, 2000). As a response to the multiplicity and complexity of change, teachers are both motivated or pressurised to pursue their CPD. The forms in which they are engaged in CPD are diverse: training, observation, involvement in a development/improvement process study groups, inquiry/action research, individually guided activities and mentoring.

This chapter concerns a variety of issues with regard to teachers CPD. It starts with rationales for CPD. It then goes on to dwell on the different perspectives of teacher development which underpin implementation designs. It is followed by discussion of principles of CPD, implementation designs, and finally problems and issues in INSET. This chapter serves as a general theoretical framework for the next chapter on INSET programmes. The two chapters would combine to cover the major issues in the field of professional development.

#### **Rationales for CPD**

Continuing professional development is a buzzword in all professions. Never before in the history of education has greater importance been attached to the professional development of educators (Guskey, 2000; Craft, 2000, etc.). As noted by Moon et al (2000) policy processes and systems are moving from a preoccupation with universal pre-service education, one of the great achievements of the twentieth century, to the challenges of creating opportunities for career-long education and training in the twenty-first.

There are two types of reasons for CPD: intrinsic and extrinsic. Kirk (1988: 45) emphasised intrinsic factors in his discussions on the need for INSET for teachers. He argued that teachers require opportunities for professional enrichment, for developing their skills and acquiring new ones, for revitalising the practice of their craft and for keeping abreast of developments in pedagogy and knowledge due to the fact that initial teacher education can never hope to prepare comprehensively for all the various demands that are to be encountered throughout a full teaching career. He further comments that development is integral to the professional life of the teacher in the sense that good teaching must always involve self-scrutiny and the search for more resourceful and imaginative approaches. Teachers will be under pressure, self-imposed or otherwise, to extend and develop the skills required by changing professional circumstances.

A number of educators addressed extrinsic factors. Guskey (2000) pointed out that as knowledge bases expand, new types of expertise are required of educators of all levels. Like practitioners in other professional fields, educators must keep abreast of this emerging knowledge and must be prepared to use it to continually refine their conceptual and craft skills. Guskey and Huberman (1995) consider the renewal of professional skills of both teachers and administrators as fundamental to improvement.

From a more comprehensive perspective, Altan (1997) stressed both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. His intrinsic reasons suggest that teachers are attracted to the idea that professional development can expand knowledge, skills and practice, contribute to growth and reinforce student learning. Their aspirations for the change of teacher beliefs, command of a wider range of knowledge, acquisition of a larger repertoire of techniques and skills and an enhanced level of expertise serve as incentives for them to pursue personal professional development continuously.

Altan's extrinsic reasons mean that developments in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), such as increasing demand for higher qualifications, levels of expertise in terms of subject knowledge, methodological competence and practical

techniques are forcing the teacher into the role of an active decision maker. There exists therefore, a real need for CPD if the teacher is going to meet the demands of the profession. Professional development is change, in learning/teaching materials, in skills and practices, in thinking and understanding. As a corollary, both intrinsic motivations and external pressures of professional developments make CPD a necessity and common routine in today's society. The emphasis will be placed on raising the individuals' professional competence through an enhanced level of scholarship and critical reflection, rather than improving immediate professional practice (Brown, 1989).

From a different angle McGuire (1993) placed his lens on sociocultural changes affecting professions and professionals. He observed that the transformation of conventional professional practice had set higher demands on professionals. Much emphasis has been shifted to exploring, reflecting on experience rather than mechanical and superficial imitating and reproducing. Therefore, in his view, most professionals would continue to be faced by more external regulation, increased competition from outside the field, intrusion of new occupations, louder public demands for more high-quality service at lower cost, and increasingly rapid and pervasive technological change that drastically alters practice. These developments will eventually impact not only most arenas of professional practice, but also most areas of professional education both directly, insofar as they alter the competencies requisite for practice, and indirectly, via their influence on the size and characteristics of the applicant pool seeking entry to the professions.

These intrinsic and extrinsic factors combine to constitute great pressures on professionals to pursue their self-development periodically in order to survive the increasingly competitive and accountable professions. The fear of 'deskilling' would impel more professionals to 'charge up their batteries' by taking part in various kinds of training programmes either full time or part time depending on their needs and availability.



## Perspectives on CPD

Professional development encompasses more than one dimensions. A number of educators have provided different perspectives, represented by Woodward (1991), Wallace (1991), Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) and Guskey (2000).

The first version is provided by Woodward (1991), which includes a *narrow* and a *broad* view of staff development. The *narrow view* maintains that staff needs can be prescribed by management and that staff development is an exercise in making sure that the individual's needs are, or should become, the organisation's needs, the individual only being seen in terms of the organisation. By contrast, a *broader view* of professional development is a more developmental approach. It includes, in the widest interpretation, personal growth within and outside the organisation, the assumption being that such growth is necessary for personal as well as professional fulfillment.

The narrow view defines the term staff development as synonymous with staff training. This rather narrow interpretation limits the exercise to one of moulding staff to fit the needs of the organisation. The implication here is that staff are a homogeneous rather than a heterogeneous group who can be managed in a rather traditional fashion. Objectives might seem clear, when the main need is for the organisation's survival at times of restricted growth and cutbacks.

The broad view considers staff development as a developmental process, aimed at personal and professional growth. This broader perspective takes the individuals as its starting point, and is concerned with making the individuals into an active participant in their own growth, acknowledging that changing is part of this. Objectives are less clear, motivation individualistic, and management more participatory than imposed.

The second version is represented by a summary provided by Wallace (1991), which includes *the craft model*, *the applied science model* and *the reflective model*. The first one, defined as *the craft model*, is characterised by the perception of

professional expertise as the craft and the practice that the young trainee learns by imitating the expert's techniques and by following the expert's instructions and advice. This stance underpins the conception of professional development as a technical process to help professionals provide better service to clients. It very much relies on the empirical-analytical paradigm for curriculum design (Harris, 1993: 41). The chief advantage of this paradigm is the provision "of a 'quasi technology'" (to use Harris' phrase) for a linear process of curriculum design, including strategies for selection of educational objectives, selection and organisation of content and learning experiences, content of evaluation and provisions of a framework for curriculum research in professional education.

The main drawback of the epistemology of technical rationality is it is basically static and imitative. It does not adequately address either the types of problems that are central to professional practice or the knowledge and methods needed to solve these problems. Its assumption that scientific knowledge and technologies have clear and general applicability to situations of practice is severely questionable. It is recognised that most practice situations have elements of uniqueness or instability. Moreover, some of the most important problematic situations for professionals involve a determination of the nature of problems. Standardised solutions may not fit the context of a specific problem. Nonetheless, the craft model cannot be dismissed out of hand. The value it accords to experiential aspect of professional development still has its place.

The second paradigm in Wallace's version, termed *the applied science model*, also reflects the 'technical rationality'. This paradigm derives its authority from the achievements of empirical science, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Within this framework, practical knowledge of anything is simply a matter of relating the most appropriate means to whatever objectives have been decided on. The whole issue of the practice of a profession is therefore merely instrumental in its nature (Wallace, 1991: 8).

One advancement of this model on the basis of the craft model is that 'the important area of classroom and group management has received detailed empirical study, and a body of theoretical and practical knowledge has been amassed which begins to put the problems of discipline on a scientific footing...' (Stones and Morris, 1972: 14). The main problem with the applied science model is a split between research and professional practice, which has in turn engendered problems of status which are particularly acute in teaching. It has also led to a tendency to downgrade the value of professionals' expertise derived from experience. Another problem has been the tendency for the model to promise what it has not so far been able to deliver: a 'scientific' solution to very complex professional dilemmas.

The third paradigm, described as *the reflective model*, is put forward by Schon (1983, 1987, 1991 & 1999) as a response to the deficiencies of the previous two models. It pinpointed the inadequacies of the two models, but did not mean to eschew them. It is a compromise solution which gives due weight both to experience and to the scientific basis of the profession (Wallace, 1991: 17). It acknowledges the role of experience in professional development and states that the knowledge base builds, in part, on experience gained from specific cases or examples in a professional practice. However, it also recognises the limitation of the part played by experience. Technical experience is not enough to practise effectively. It acknowledges the problems that relate to education for complex practices, involving not only specialised bodies of knowledge but also reflective and practical competences developed through experience with perplexing situations of practices and reflection on that experience. It also acknowledges the problems that relate to the implementation of curriculum reform and changes in complex institutional settings, embedded in a social and political context. Schon argues for the central role of knowing-in-action, learned through experience, reflection-in-action, and reflection-about-action.

These three competencies account for the skill, and sometimes artistry, that practitioners bring to situations of complexity, uniqueness, and value conflict. It intends to integrate received knowledge (Wallace, 1991: 12) or 'research-based theories and techniques', and experiential knowledge or 'knowing-in-action' and 'reflection' in Schon's terms. Received knowledge includes, among other things, the

necessary and valuable elements of scientific research, and experiential knowledge related to the professional's ongoing experience.

A different model is provided by Hargreaves and Fullan (1992). It includes descriptions of professional development as *knowledge and skills development*, as *self-understanding* and as *ecological change*. These three perspectives stem from different assumptions with their distinctive strengths and their problems.

Hargreaves and Fullan point out that *skills-based development*, the first of the three perspectives, is an important component of the teacher development process. Its remarkable advantage is its practicality with its focus on methods that are understandable to and usable by teachers in their own classrooms. Hence it enjoys high administrative popularity. Its disadvantages are apparent. It is very time-consuming, laborious and costly. In addition, it is too often imposed on teachers rather than developed with them (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992: 6). And the skills in which teachers are trained are all too often implemented out of context – their appropriateness for the teacher as a person, for the teacher's purpose, or for the particular classroom setting in which the teacher works, being overlooked.

The second perspective, the view of teacher development as *self-understanding*, is more humanistic and critical. It recognises that teacher development is a process of personal development. It argues that teacher development involves not only teachers' behaviour, but also the person the teacher is (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). To focus on behavioural skills alone without reference to their grounding in or impact on attitudes and beliefs is misguided and liable to prove ineffective (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992). Echoing Hargreaves and Fullan (1992), Clandinin and Connelly (1988) view self-understanding in the form of reflection on one's personal and practical knowledge of teaching comes before meaningful and substantial changes in teaching behaviour.

Despite the benefits of self-understanding perspective, it has some important limitations as suggested by Hargreaves and Fullan (1992). It can become



self-indulgent, involving teachers, developers and researchers in relationships that are intensive and ultimately rewarding yet not easily replicated across other teacher groups. It can also be slow, time-consuming and costly, and its outcomes are unpredictable. Besides, Fullan (1987) argues that it overemphasises personal responsibility for change and draws attention away from controversial questions about the context in which teachers work, and the ways in which it enhances or inhibits personal or professional development.

The third perspective, an ecological one, emphasises the context in which teacher development happens. It argues that the context of teachers' working environment provides conditions in which teacher development initiatives succeed or fail (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992). It advocates the importance of seeking to develop a context that is supportive and conducive to teacher development.

Despite the different terms employed by Wallace, on the one hand, and by Fullan and Hargreaves on the other hand, there is a considerable degree of overlap between them. The craft model is similar to the skills-based perspective in that they both perceive teacher development as a process of acquiring practical knowledge and skills necessary for their day-to-day teaching practice. The common weakness of them is that they are both prescriptive and seek to provide relatively definitive solutions to problems or issues which overlook the indefinite and unpredictable aspects of day-to-day teaching and learning practices. The reflective model shares similar features with self-understanding perspective in that they both stress the role of reflection and personal growth in teacher development, going beyond the confines of skills learning.

The fourth version is proposed by Guskey (2000). In his view, professional development is a process that is *intentional*, *ongoing* and *systemic*. '*Intentional*' means professional development is not a set of random, unrelated activities that have no clear direction or intent, but a deliberate process, guided by a clear vision of purposes and planned goals and designed to bring about positive change and improvement.

*'Ongoing'* suggests that every individual teacher is required to be a continuous learner throughout the entire span of their professional career in a dynamic professional field with a continually expanding knowledge-base. They must constantly analyse the effectiveness of what they do and why they do it, reflect on their current practice, make adaptations when things are not going well, and continually explore new alternatives and opportunities for improvement.

*'Systemic'* indicates that professional development is seen not just in terms of individual improvement, but also in terms of improvements in the capacity of the organisation to solve problems and renew itself. It highlights the need to consider change over an extended period of time and take into account all levels of the organisation. A clear, systemic approach to professional development that considers both individual and organisational development is necessary for improvement. It recognises the involvement of everyone who affects student learning.

In sum these four versions point to the importance of a conscious and deliberate ongoing self-reflective learning process in a supportive environment for teacher development. Theory, practice, reflection, contexts are essential ingredients in the process of teacher development. Nevertheless, the four versions, prescriptive in nature, view CPD as a straightforward matter. They have failed to consider professional development from a management and developmental point of view. They are all focused on the staff development as teachers' individual or collective development within their institutions. The dynamic and complex characteristics of professional development are not addressed. The processes of managing CPD have not received sufficient attention, which involve harmonising the relationships between multiple interrelated factors within and beyond institutions.

## Principles of Effective CPD

Four principles of CPD stand out related to the perspectives discussed previously. The relationship between institutional and individual development is an overriding principle. It entails addressing affective dimension of CPD by responding to teachers' personal concerns. Additionally, professional development is an ongoing and reflective process.

### *Integrating institutional and individual development*

There have been two contrasting perspectives on the professional development of teachers: institutional and individual perspectives (Kirk, 1988). The institutional perspective stresses the needs of institutions and the individual perspective concerns the needs and aspirations of individual teachers themselves. In INSET activities viewed from the institutional perspective, the impetus for development comes from the institution – the school or the education authority; these activities are institutionally driven in the sense that they are intended to enhance institutions' responsiveness and also to facilitate the implementation of new policies and strategies.

In contrast, the individual perspective locates the basis of in-service activities in the needs of the individual teacher rather than in those of the institution (Kirk, 1988: 47). It asserts the voluntary principle: it entails the undertaking of activities not in recognition of an institutional policy but out of a personal or professional commitment. It goes further to conclude that no professional development worthy of the name can take place unless it is rooted in the individual teacher's awareness of a problem in practice and the commitment to explore ways of solving that problem and thus becoming a better teacher. It perhaps shows greater respect for and recognition of teachers' accumulated expertise and professionalism.

In Kirk's view polarisation of the two perspectives may to some extent be conducive to INSET activities, but would by no means optimise them due to their respective

strengths and weaknesses. The institutional-led model may be an effective and relatively cheap means of enabling teachers to acquire skills, but it is also likely to be an irksome imposition and an infringement of teachers' professional autonomy if it fails to take account of teachers' own assessment of their professional needs, if it fails to engage their commitment, and if it does not address the problems as they see them (Kirk, 1988: 49). Equally a self-motivated and self-regulated individual mode might generate involvement of a high order and strengthen teachers' commitment to their work, but it could be of strictly limited institutional value (however richly satisfying it might be in individual cases) if it took insufficient account of institutional problems.

Given their respective inherent strengths and limitations, Kirk proposes reconciliation of them to make the best of INSET programmes. He argues that professional development necessarily involves teachers in the scrutiny of their practice but they can be stimulated to begin that scrutiny, and helped to be systematic and rigorous in it, as well as being supported in their search for improved professional performance (1988: 51).

Kirk's view is echoed by a large number of researchers (e.g. Bell & Day, 1991; Craft 2000; Guskey, 2000; Fullan, 1982; Day, 2000). Bell and Day (1991: 4) suggest that the interdependent relationship of the school and teachers is crucial: teachers cannot improve their performance consistently if the organisation is in poor health, and the total functioning of the school rests on the sum of the individual teachers' contributions. Dove (1986: 200) emphasised the role of teachers in her discussion of attributes of effective schools, maintaining that the school effectiveness depends on the way teachers conduct themselves. She also argues that it is the quality of the people who operate and manage institutions who largely determine their effectiveness. It is important to exploit not only the individual teachers' quality, but the effectiveness of teachers working as a team in the school. Guskey (2000) contends that there exists a symbiotic relationship between individual and institutional development. On the one hand, dynamic and vigorous schools provide a congenial environment for individual teachers' development. Individuals find it hard



to develop in static schools. On the other hand, schools are unable to develop without teachers changing what they do. If teachers do develop professionally, but individually, they may not be able to change their schools. They presuppose each other and facilitate each other. Loucks-Horsley et al (1987) argue that professional development should be based on a view of how teachers learn both as individuals and as members of a whole school or team and that such learning involves changes, during which teachers need a mixture of support, success, pressure and involvement.

As a result, both individual and institutional development should be on the agenda for CPD. It is of vital importance to create a climate within a learning school conducive to both individual and school development. A school in which teachers individually and collectively are seeking to develop and extend their expertise, is one that is likely to value professional growth. It is the teacher who has to change in ways that are substantially of his/her own design. It is one which both fosters and is a product of professional development.

In the process of going about CPD, as Guskey (2000) and Kirk (1988) suggest, a reconciliation of needs is essential. Ignoring either of them might lead to a failure to achieve the optimal outcome of professional development due to their respective weaknesses. Cumming et al (1985) argue that the teachers cannot be developed; they should not be considered as the object of development intentions. His view echoes Scott's view (1999), i.e. that a process of reconciliation (of individual and institutional development needs) can only come about meaningfully and fruitfully when the individuals concerned are truly part of setting objectives for the larger whole as well as for themselves. Fullan (1993) calls this process of reconciling the individual with the institution 'institutional renewal'.

### *Professional development as an ongoing process*

Professional development, as Guskey (2000: 38) argues, is an ongoing activity woven into the fabric of every educator's professional life. It should be an indispensable part of all forms of leadership and collegial sharing. It is a natural and recurring process integral to all learning environments. And because any change that

holds great promise for increasing individuals' competence or enhancing an organisation's effectiveness is likely to be slow and require extra work, this process is recognised as a continuous endeavour that needs to involve everyone in the organisation (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978)

New programmes or innovations that are implemented well eventually will be likely to be regarded as a natural part of practitioners' repertoire of professional skills. They should also be built into an organisation's normal structures and practices (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Miles & Louis, 1990).

### *Professional development as a reflective process*

As discussed previously in the Section of Perspectives on CPD, professional development should incorporate the reflective element as one of the most important features. Open-mindedness, responsibility and whole-heartedness are a prerequisite in reflection (Altan, 1997). Accordingly forms and forums for developing reflective practice need to be created, which are characterised by teachers' learning by doing, by their dealing with complex problems of practice together, in a virtual world representing but not identical to the world of practice.

Besides the training modes which are in the confine of educational theories, learning needs to be taken into account in professional education to make it fit into professional education. It is of vital importance to appreciate the fact that professionals are not blank slates or empty disks. They come with ways and means as sophisticated as the knowledge base that they use in practice. They have systems for incorporating new information into competence and performance. As a consequence professional education must base its programme decisions on an understanding of the dynamics of learning in professional settings (Bennet and Fox, 1993).

### *Taking into account the affective dimensions of CPD*

As Harland and Kinder (1997) observed, the time commitments of CPD would sometimes cause guilt in teachers, and stresses and strains in family life, attempts

should therefore be made to achieve positive affective outcomes and avert negative ones. This view is echoed in Goddard and Leask's (1992) observation of the occurrence of 'change dip' when confidence and motivation fall.

Practical advice is provided by Davies and Preston (2002) to minimise effects on stress levels and family commitments. They suggested that course participants should be given a high level of both academic and pastoral support, particularly when they embark on training after a long break from study. Attending to teachers' personal concerns would help maintain their motivations for CPD.

### **Implementation Designs**

A number of writers have shown special interest in the types of INSET and their different assumptions. Guskey (2000) provides three approaches: *site-based*, *district-wide* and *integrated design*.

The first two approaches are commonly employed in CPD initiatives. They have their respective advantages and shortcomings. *Site-based designs*, are likely to be contextually relevant. At this level, too, consensus on issues related to professional development is easier to reach because fewer individuals and constituencies are involved. However, the site-based approaches limit interactions to an individual level, which would in turn constrain the diffusion of intended effects.

*District-wide* designs offer important advantages as well as its drawbacks. The advantages are reflected in four aspects. First, it can ameliorate the development of a broader vision for improvement. Second, it offers more extended opportunities for sharing ideas and resources. These experiences can allow educators to broaden their perspectives, share materials and ideas, and expand their repertoires of professional practices (Guskey, 2000: 30). Third, it offers opportunities for collaboration across school levels. Finally, it is efficient in sharing expertise with teachers from different schools exchanging with each other their ideas and experiences.

Nonetheless, as Guskey suggests, district-wide designs have a relatively poor record of success due to their generally low relevance compared with that of site-based approaches, and on top of that, follow-up support is easily overlooked.

The third alternative in Guskey's model, *integrated design* arose as an answer to the defects of the two designs. It attempts to integrate positive aspects of both district-wide and site-based approaches, using each for the purpose for which it is best suited (Guskey, 2000). It would address teachers' practical needs that emerge from their day-to-day work, and accommodate them with practical knowledge and expertise to tackle various tasks.

Kirk (1988: 51) identified two modes of INSET courses, school-based and college-based. The key difference between the two modes, in Kirks' view, is that while college-based modes entail attendance at courses provided by colleges, universities and others, school-based modes recognise issues which arise in the life of a school and have to be resolved in the school by people working there. Besides, college-based modes have traditionally been pre-designed, reflecting issues and concerns mainly identified by college staff, rather than addressing the needs and circumstances of individual schools, objects or teachers.

Nevertheless, Kirk conceded that both school-based and college-based training offer some important advantages. The school-based mode is concerned to activate and sustain the commitment of the staff of a school to work out their own solutions to their own problems. At its best, it engages teachers and college tutors in collaborative roles, sharing insights on teaching problems.

The college-based mode explicitly addresses school and classroom practice. At its best, in Kirk's view, it can capitalise upon the ongoing professional experience of course participants, and enable them to use their classroom as a testing ground for theories. And principles introduced on a course can provide a basis for the generation of personal theories of teaching. In addition, it can also be a good opportunity for teachers from a variety of different contexts and backgrounds to share and



disseminate insights on teaching. Finally it could be an opportunity to improve teachers' academic and professional qualifications.

In Kirk's view, school-based in-service is more widely welcomed than the college-based training. The college-based training often has to operate at such a high level of generality that it cannot be made to relate to the concerns of individual schools. It is also thought of as too theoretical to illuminate the practical problems of the classroom (Kirk, 1988: 52).

A somewhat different model is provided by Henderson (1978: 41), which includes school-based and school-focused modes. Henderson claims that the school-based training is likely to pose serious problems of economic non-feasibility and potential parochialism despite its high relevance to teachers' day-to-day teaching practice. The school-focused medium of training is one which can take place either on or off the job and can be provided by outside agencies or by the school itself. Henderson considers the school-focused mode as more effective for its distinctive and incomparable focus being directed towards the immediate and specific needs of one school or one group of schools, although it may not necessarily be located within the school.

As Table 2.1 shows, there is disparity as well as overlap between the models provided by the three writers. Despite the terminological differences, school-based model is endorsed by the three writers. School-focused model is identified by Guskey, named district-wide designs. College-based approach is recognised by Kirk as a commonly used approach. Guskey proposed integrated design based on the recognition of the limitations of school-based and school-focused modes.

**Table 2.1 Models of CPD**

Models	Writers		
	Guskey (2000)	Kirk (1988)	Henderson (1978)
School-based	√ (site-based)	√	√
School-focused	√ (district-wide)		√
College-based		√	
Integrated design	√ school-based & school-focused; school-based but other-focused; college-based but school-focused; college-based but other-focused.		

The choice of the approaches reflects underlying assumptions about teachers' professional development and perceptions of the relationship between institutional development and individual development, and practical needs of both individuals and institutions. The polarisation of them would not be beneficial to either dimension of professional development. Instead, to take Guskey's view, the most productive stance would be to take account of their respective strengths and weaknesses and to blend these appropriately to achieve optimal effects. It is not therefore a matter of good versus bad approaches, but rather a question of how to make the best of the various possible modes.

### **Problems and Issues in INSET**

INSET, in Henderson's (1978) view can include everything that happens to teachers from the day they take up their first appointment to the day they retire which contributes, directly or indirectly, to the way in which they execute their professional duties. It can also include any activity which teachers undertake, after they have begun to teach, which is concerned with their professional work.

Since the rapid growth of INSET in the 1970s (Henderson, 1978), apparent impacts have been realised on teachers and institutions. At the same time, all innovation is a risky business (Markee, 1993). There have arisen hosts of problems and issues in INSET. As Guskey observed (2000), the number of effective training courses is deplorably small compared with the boom of INSET courses. Adams and Chen

(1981) noted that close to three-quarters of educational innovations are likely to fail over time.

A variety of issues have been brought to the fore in the literature. Dove (1986) highlights resources, teacher characteristics, teacher financing, career structures (promotion policies), administrative and professional support, teacher training as likely constraints. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) concur on the importance of relevance and feasibility. Easen (1985: 71) comments that imposed change itself will not be successful, unless the process of personal change is also considered. Carless (1999) claims that even those who are willing to change must be given the support to do so.

The reasons for the general failure are multiple and course-specific. It would be hard to exhaust all the problems and issues; nevertheless, it might be worth drawing some major observations to shed light on underlying reasons for setbacks of innovations. A list of the main reasons which are drawn from existing research would help to highlight these potential consequences and prompt reflection on how they might be avoided and minimised.

#### *Lack of clarity of innovations*

Two factors related to clarity of innovations were identified by Fullan (1991) as hindering implementation of innovations: false clarity and painful unclarity, which would in turn result in superficial change or failure to change (Anley, 1993). Superficial change is characterised by teachers' endorsing certain goals, using the new materials and prescribed approaches, and even initiating the behaviour compatible with an altered attitude without specifically understanding the principles and rationale of the change. Failure to change would occur when teachers retreat into a self-protective cocoon, inflexibly rejecting all proposed innovation. It is caused by a gap between envisaged goals and the interpreted ones among the diversity of parties, the failure to address the meaning of change and a profound lack of conceptual basis in the planning and implementation (Anley, 1993). Yat-ming

(1991), in his study of a geography curricular reform in China identifies the lack of clarity about change as one of the factors that undermines the implementation of an innovation.

However, there is a limit to the degree of clarity. Stoller (1994) points out that there are indications that excessive explicitness and visibility could hamper innovative efforts. Berg and Ostergren (1979) also argue that excessive visibility can threaten the acceptance of an innovation because highly visible system-divergent practices threaten individuals who are satisfied with the status quo, leading to a mobilisation of the opposition. The degree of complexity, flexibility, compatibility and originality would also affect the innovation. It is supposed to be at an appropriate level, neither too high, nor too low.

### *Lack of planning*

It has been noted that the reason for the failure of much educational reform lies in the absence of planning for change and guidelines for attaining goals (Anley, 1993). Trowler et al (2003) suggest that large plans and vague ideas are a lethal combination. It is not enough to develop and advocate the goals of change as if all that is needed are good intentions or common sense, i.e. a linear understanding of change.

Nevertheless, planning does not mean imposition of prescriptions or desired panacea given the exploratory and unpredictable nature of innovations. On the contrary it allows for necessary alterations to deal with occurrences of contingencies.

### *Lack of persistent effort at the grassroots*

The absence of persistent effort would result in failure. Anley (1993) pinpointed the high demand of commitment from teachers, combined with negligible rewards as one cause for this situation. In his discussions on why research and developments fail, Anley reports that one of the essential solutions to circumventing confusion, anxiety

and abandonment of effort is to realise the huge gap between the benefits promised and those received. It would undermine teachers' morale who are keen to see envisaged outcomes. This problem is compounded by teachers' large amount of daily routine work.

Doyle and Ponder (1977) highlight bypassing teachers as another cause. In their analysis of the practicality ethic in teacher decision-making, they note that innovation projects tend to bypass teacher decision-making – in other words, generate a set of control mechanisms which are typically absent from the normal teaching environment and which increase teacher passivity and suspend normal teacher reactions to improvement directives.

There is a potential danger of teacher training being merely an internally self-referring process in which trainers and trainees take part in a closed dialogue that simply 'refers' to the classroom. Whitney (1988) observed that the frequent lack of opportunity for trainees to give feedback to institutions about how well their training equipped them for teaching highlights the danger. The benefits of individual teachers would fail to be shared by their colleagues, which would in turn to some extent be a detriment to the development of collegiality and collaboration and institutional development.

### *Cultural mismatches between imported technology and local conventions and needs*

Cultural factors can be barriers in innovations since change occurs in the sociocultural context of an institution's values, norms, traditions, and history – its culture (Green, 1991). Lado (1957: 59) argues that it is caused by the fact that members of one culture usually assume that their ways of doing things, of understanding the world around them, their forms and their meaning, are the correct ones. Kennedy (1988) also pinpointed cultural values as potential barriers weighed over political conventions, and administrative other practices.



There exist numerous empirical studies that address cultural incongruence in cross-cultural teacher training programmes. Li (1998) identified the teacher, the students and the educational system as inhibitory factors alongside the difficulties caused by the communicative language teaching (CLT) in the application of CLT in South Korea. Drawing on his experience on a senior-middle school teachers training course in Hangzhou in China, Hird (1995: 22) claimed that three factors had hampered teachers' reception of western methods: past traditions, current practices and the way in which CLT has been interpreted. Lamb (1995), in his comparison of in-service course content in Indonesia with later classroom practice reported a clash between the two cultures.

There is more support from other researchers from a variety of cultural backgrounds to corroborate this view. Gross et al (1971) identified in a detailed case study five context-related elements as being responsible for minimal implementation: the teachers' lack of clarity about the innovation; their lack of needed capabilities; the unavailability of required instructional materials; the incompatibility of organisational arrangements with the innovation; and the lack of staff motivation. In a study of the impact of a one-week teacher training course in Germany, Early and Bolitho (1981) identified mismatches between externally defined 'needs' and 'needs' experienced by participants as one of the main hindrances. They reported that outside experts' limited knowledge of the nature of the conditions was likely to rule out a constructive outcome.

### *Resistance*

Although mandated changes may produce compliance, as was noted by a number of educators (e.g. Fullan, 1991; Lipsky, 1980; Trowler, 1998), professionals have considerable scope for compliance-without-change, resistance and subversion.

Resistance, as Watson (1970) suggests, occurs in dimensions of personality (e.g. habit, primacy, dependence, self-trust and insecurity) and social systems (e.g. conformity to norms, system and cultural coherence, vested interests, sacrosanct, and rejection of 'outsiders') to contribute to stability in personality or in social systems.



A sizeable amount of evidence emerged from empirical studies. A major source of resistance is the gap between demands of innovations and characteristics of local milieu. At institutional level, Craft (2000) recognised that the politics of change, i.e. networks and hierarchies of power and authority alliance, can serve as a potential source of barrier if it is not taken into account. As Craft noted, being aware of the politics of work is like listening to 'the music behind the words'; just as in a song, the music can have far more impact and effect than the words alone.

At classroom level, Doyle and Ponder (1977) identified a practicality ethic as a potential source of teacher resistance, which meant practicality (instrumentality, congruence and cost) affected teachers' attitudes towards innovations. Ahrens (1986) argues in her discussions on teachers' rejection of communicative teaching that teachers find it 'intrinsically useful' but 'daunting' and 'not possible in their teaching circumstances' due to a series of contextual constraints: students' level of English proficiency and poor morale, shortage of equipment and facilities, and most importantly teachers' perceptions of how pupils learn a language and objectives for classroom work.

De-skilling effect of innovations was considered as another major potential source of resistance. Entwistle et al (2000) found in an empirical study of student teachers' conceptions and beliefs about 'good teaching' that conceptions were hard to change in a short period of time because they were derived from a coherent integration of experience and previous knowledge. Anley (1993) shares the same view expressed in his statement that the amount of energy and time required to learn the new skills of roles associated with a new innovation is useful index to the magnitude of resistance. Medgyes (1986) ascribed Hungarian teachers' resistance to communicative approach to lack of time, modesty, diminished self-confidence, exhaustion and cynicism, fears and anxiety. Luxon (1994) attributes teacher resistance to their anxiety due to being obliged or strongly urged to give up an environment in which they would previously have felt comfortable and in command.

By the same token, Craft (2000) notes that the process of change can be accompanied by a mixture of feelings, including insecurity, uncertainty, and a sense of becoming de-skilled at one end, and more vitality and motivation at the other end. Goddard (1992) uses 'the change dip' to illustrate the loss of confidence and de-skilling that can accompany change. He suggests that teachers' resistance is derived from their existing assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning, which in turn are subject to the influence of a multiplicity of factors including their life experiences, background, life style, life cycle, career stage and critical incidents. This kind of de-skilling is likely to cause a feeling of frustration and in turn to induce resistance both from individual teachers and institutions whose established beliefs, values and cultures conflict with the change. Day et al (2000) in a recent small-scale study suggested that externally imposed reforms have, whilst holding the potential to 'de-skill' teachers, and to make them feel their professional artistry is being undermined, the potential to reinforce teachers' own stances.

It is also found that teachers' attitudes towards change are to some extent predicated upon their personal characteristics, their experience and the type of schools they teach in as well as the wider context. Doyle and Ponder (1977) categorise teachers as three groups of recipients: the rational adopter, who systematically follows a set of problem-solving steps; the stone-age obstructionist, who are steadfastly opposed to change; and the pragmatic skeptic, who are individualistic, concerned about immediate contingencies and consequences, and oriented toward the concrete and the procedural rather than the abstract and the general. They argue that individualism, immediacy and concreteness are inhibitive factors in teachers' attitudes towards innovations.

Based on their study of four innovations in Scottish integrated science scheme for the first two years of secondary schools, Brown and McIntyre (1982) reported that for those classroom innovations which depend crucially for their implementation on the attitudes of individual teachers, professional colleagues are almost as powerless as administrative authorities to exert effective pressure on the individual teachers. To persuade teachers to change their classroom practices, one has to give them

convincing reasons for doing so.

Rogers (1983) noted that laggards, one group of the five categories of adopters of innovation, are the least positive about change. Joyce and Showers (1988) find that teachers who were more active professionally were also more actively personally. They believe that teachers' enthusiasm for professional development is affected by how actively they engage with their environment and by the state of their conceptual development. They found that of the three types of people (gourmet omnivores, passive consumers and reticent consumers), the last two groups were less enthusiastic for change than the first group. Ibrahim (1991) pointed out in his evaluation of an in-service training course in Malaysia that it is the teachers' sense of professionalism that goes a long way in determining how much they are ready to change after the course.

At a comprehensive system level, Hall and Oldroyd (1991) consider every aspect in change process which can pose potential barriers to change. They identify three types of barrier to change – technical (lack of resources, facilities, time, etc.), value (where teachers' beliefs and attitudes are opposed to the change) and power (where the head teacher is against the change or there is not a 'critical mass' of staff in favour of it). They suggest that these barriers are often encountered in the following sequence: technical, value, power. They also find that the characteristics of setting, change strategies and changes are likely to lead to resistance to change. The settings that they consider as very unlikely to be receptive, let alone supportive to change are those where morale is low, change agents are not respected, there is a track record of failed innovation, risk-taking is discouraged, leaders are inflexible in their attitudes and there is little outside support. The kinds of change strategies they see as de-motivating to teachers are those which are unaccompanied by practical training and support on-the-job, which do not adapt to developing circumstances, which do not recognise local needs, which offer no sense of collective 'ownership' and which do not build a 'critical mass' for change. The innovations that they perceive as not welcome are those which are not seen as beneficial, which cannot be clearly understood, which are at odds with their professional beliefs, and which are

inadequately resourced.

One more potential source of resistance is to do with teachers' psychological stages in their career. Huberman (1992) drawing on a model of three stages of teachers' career (initial enthusiasm on entry to the professional, a period of stabilisation, and a period of serenity or conservatism) claims that teachers' attitudes towards their professional development also have to do with their psychological stages. Such factors as their ages, professional experiences and their personal dispositions will play a part in their reactions to innovations.

### *Unavailability of institutional support*

Resources are perceived as a necessary condition in implementation process. Fullan (1991) defines resources as accumulation and provision of support for the innovation. Dove (1986: 198) stressed the role of institutional support and suggested that teachers, however well educated and trained, were rendered less effective if schools lacked the basic facilities, equipment and materials necessary for teaching and learning. In her view the reason frequently given for withholding finance to education in preference for other sectors is that returns on educational investment are difficult to attribute and have proved disappointing. Wu and Chang (1990) also noted the paucity of social support for teacher education, unsatisfying better living conditions and limited financial returns as detriments in China's teacher education.

### *Perception gaps*

It is recognised that any innovation requires the individuals concerned to work out their own meaning (Anley, 1993). Despite the acknowledgement that conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change (Anley, 1993), differing perspectives may easily lead to misunderstanding, disagreement or break-down of communication, or even conflicts or discord, which in turn is likely to undermine the collaboration among different parties. Leah (1991) proved in his study of a cross-cultural project in Sudan the possibility of intra-cultural and cross-cultural divergence in cross-cultural initiatives. He observed the existence of obvious disparity at three levels: between expatriates and Sudanese, between local



management and staff over project matters, between staff and management within the project. This has caused considerable difficulty in achieving alignment, cohesion and consensus. His comments on the communication gaps between expatriates and the local staff are that aid projects incorporate objectives, strategies and performance criteria that are largely the product of western cultures, and these differing perceptions present an impediment to maximum utilisation of local potential and hence to long-term project gains. Katz (1970) found in his two studies of diffusion of innovations on farmers' reactions to hybrid corn seed and doctors' attitudes towards gammanym that lack of information and breakdown of communication had been an inhibiting factor in the process of adoption of innovations.

### *The 'cloning effect'*

Although INSET courses vary in length, (full-time courses can take one year in total, or perhaps slightly more than that in exceptional cases and part-time courses make use of vacations, weekends or one or two weekdays), overall, the time spent on such in-service training experience is not substantial in comparison with teachers' professional careers. This might lead to a series of problems, as Duff (1988) points out in his critique of the training course provided by International House London. The most significant problems he recognised are the brevity of the course and the degree of pressure which participants undergo and the extent to which this may favour certain personalities and put others at an extreme disadvantage. Thanks to the brevity of the course, course providers tend to operate the training as a 'cloning system' dedicated to producing the 'International House type teacher'. Duff further maintained that if allowed to go too far, such tendencies do run the risk of solidifying into dogma and not giving sufficiently free rein to individual instincts.

This prescriptive and manipulative effect is also critiqued by Gower (1988). He criticised the 'techniquery' commonly practised in teacher training courses, which puts main emphasis on methodology. It might lead to a variety of knock-on effects: little opportunity for self-reflection, the enormous pressure on the personalities of the trainees themselves, breeding of cock-sure attitudes that only later mellow into



respectable self-doubt and uncertainty, depriving trainees of their diversity of individuality, and further generating worries, anxieties and self-doubt.

### *Neglect of change of teacher beliefs*

Teacher beliefs are easily overlooked in INSET programmes. Ho et al, (2001) in their evaluation of a conceptual change staff development programme in Hong Kong and some other educationalists (Biggs, 1989; Ramsden, 1992) found that many staff development programmes which adhere to a teaching skills approach (on the assumption that providing tertiary teachers with prescribed skills and teaching recipes will change their teaching practice and thus improve their students' learning outcomes) have turned out not as effective as anticipated. Gower (1988) also commented that teacher training courses tend to over-concentrate on methodology training, which would lead to trainees self-doubt and uncertainty. It would cause 'ritual teaching behaviour' (Maingay, 1988) that is unthinking, or has become divorced from the principles that lie behind it. Superficial and peripheral change is likely to occur when teacher beliefs are overlooked (Zhu, 2000).

### *Lack of evaluation*

Evaluation of teacher training programmes has not received the same level of attention as INSET programmes themselves. Henderson noted that up to the early 1970s, at least, remarkably little effort had been made to collect evidence on the efficacy of in-service training programmes. Bell and Day (1991) also commented that there was little evaluation of the impact of courses on the work of teachers in schools. There was little investigation into the extent to which teacher trainees found those elements of the course work, specifically the level of relevance of those elements to their classroom practice and the level of applicability of such expertise in the context of their day-to-day work. Avalos (1985) reported that research on training that comes from developing countries had concentrated for the most part on particular aspects of training rather than evaluating comprehensively a training process.

### *Failure to address needs of teachers and institutions*

The diversity of needs is a common phenomenon, but has remained unresolved. There is ample empirical evidence to suggest that needs at both individual level and institutional level have tended to be overlooked in teacher training courses. Parrott (1988) acknowledged the problem of identifying objectives, and also a further difficulty of reconciling disparate or conflicting objectives within the group. He identified three factors as affecting the objectives of particular course participants: teaching situation, experience of learning English and previous teacher training and personal reasons for attending the course. A variety of approaches Parrott suggested that sought to overcome these problems entailed enhancing sensitivity to learners' needs and flexibility in course running, however, they seemed to be impracticable due to the brevity of many courses. It is not uncommon that course providers impose their expectations on their trainees, which may make them 'exhausted, drained and worn out' (Ruzsa, 1998) with the 'didactic, over-academic and passive courses' (Dove, 1986).

The needs of institutions have received less attention than those of individual teachers. Training courses generally cater for the individuals' needs for their own professional development, and are not often based on the collective development needs. Bell and Day (1991) found that a total separation between course organisers and the teachers exists in some schools. Course organisers tend to emphasise the expertise of those outside schools and to deny the legitimacy of the teacher-as-expert. Consequently they fail to establish appropriate feedback and follow-up mechanisms for such courses.

The preceding discussions have addressed the major factors that may inhibit change process and consequently give rise to undesirable outcomes. The important considerations include a multiplicity of dimensions. The first is derived from the programmes per se, including clarity of goals, expertise of trainers, and methodology employed. The second is the level of fitness between the programme features and the

local environment. Teachers' prior assumptions and personal traits, institutional climate, the level of support and physical resources are important factors. Finally, communication between various parties concerned can also be influential. The non-fulfilment of any of these factors would result in a failure of the innovation.

## **Concluding Comments**

I have so far undertaken a comprehensive review of CPD in general which covers a series of issues in terms of rationales for and principles of CPD, implementation designs, and problems and issues that have emerged from CPD implementations. The discussions, albeit not exhaustive are meant to highlight the substantive issues, to provide a framework for understanding the processes and complexities of CPD, and pinpointing crucial factors for implementation of CPD initiatives and to optimise their outcomes. They also serve as a background for the exploration of INSET programmes which is to be addressed in the following chapter.

The discussions have highlighted professional development as an intentional, ongoing and systemic process to facilitate teachers' CPD, either extrinsically or intrinsically motivated ones. Four perspectives of CPD summarised respectively by Woodward (1991), Wallace (1991), Hargreaves and Fullan (1992), and Guskey (2000) have been addressed. Despite their different foci, they all boil down to the importance of a conscious and deliberate ongoing self-reflective learning process in a supportive environment for teacher development. Models of CPD were underpinned by their perspectives, encompassing site-based design, district-wide design and integrated design. The principles of effective CPD involve integrating institutional and individual development, perceiving professional development as an ongoing reflective process, and taking account of the affective dimension of CPD, i.e. teachers' personal concerns are to be appreciated.

The major problems in INSET courses have been brought up in order for INSET to be as effective as expected. As indicated previously, these problems derive from a variety of dimensions: training courses themselves (training methodology, expertise

of project teams), the level of congruence between the courses and the indigenous milieu (resources, teacher beliefs and motivations, institutional climate) and communication between multiple parties concerned. There are some overlaps in these discussions with those to be conducted in the succeeding part of the literature review in the next chapter. Besides, analyses of the underlying reasons and precautions and measures to be taken to minimise those pitfalls will be provided as well. These two chapters combine to capture the substantive issues in managing cross-cultural INSET initiatives and fulfilling the goal of enhancing their longer-term sustainability.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Literature Review (2)**

#### **Major Issues in Managing Cross-Cultural INSET Initiatives**

#### **Introduction**

Change is recognised as one of the most important features of today's society. Complexity and unpredictability are the main characteristics of the evolving nature of change. Initiatives like INSET programmes intended to enhance teachers' CPD are virtually change, or innovations themselves. They are new attempts made by a diversity of groups of parties, involving teachers at grassroots level, the management at both the meso level and the macro level in order to create better conditions, both physical and social to optimise teachers' personal professional development and institutional development. The implementation of the change is by no means a straightforward and linear process where prescriptions often do no work. Contingencies and complications of various kinds that arise in the implementation process usually lead to a failure to implement innovations in the manner that has been envisioned. This dismal scenario is frustrating, but at the same time it has created new potentials for change, either in the form of remedies or new endeavours.

In order to manage INSET programmes and to enhance the prospect of their longer-term sustainability, it is worthwhile to consider a series of issues in the light of the mechanism of change, which stem from previous experiences of change process. The review of them is not meant to seek prescriptions, or panaceas for all change contexts, which is most likely to cause rigidity and failure. Instead, it is intended to draw conceptual perspectives which are potentially insightful in a wide range of change contexts. In the meantime it needs to be acknowledged that it is entirely up to individuals to give full play to their originality, ingenuity and



responsiveness based on their knowledge of the essentials about change process and their previous experience of managing change.

This chapter is a continuation of the preceding one, with its focus placed on management of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. It first reviews a number of interrelated conceptual issues with regard to change and longer-term sustainability: characteristics of change, strategies for change, change process and features of sustainability. It then continues to discuss practical dimensions in enhancing longer-term sustainability of INSET initiatives.

The review of these issues separately is not meant to suggest a simplistic impression that they can be separated neatly and stand in their own right. On the contrary they are inextricably intermingled in complex change process. The conclusion emerges that change, as a complicated process instead of a linear one, depends on constellations of conditions. It requires efforts and collaboration among various groups of people, involves communication between people from differing cultural backgrounds. Support in terms of policy, finance and resources is a prerequisite. It requires unfailing endeavours on the part of people with tenacity, creativeness and vision. These inherent features make it a matter-of-course that INSET activities for teacher's professional development in whatever kinds of context will go through an ongoing process. Their longer-term sustainability hinges upon a multiplicity of internal and external factors in a given INSET context. An array of parameters need to be taken into consideration throughout the implementation process.

### **Perspectives on Change and Longer-term Sustainability**

Today's society is characterised by continuous change. As Fullan (1991) put it, change pursues us in every way: the answer is not to avoid it, but to exploit it before it victimises us.

There are a number of synonymous terms with changes: innovations, initiatives, and interventions. Trowler and Knight (2001) make a distinction between them. They argue that changes are planned or unplanned alterations to an environment (positive

or negative, deliberate or not). While innovations are processes of planned deliberate change directed towards, but not necessarily achieving, improvement (Hannan and Silver, 2000). Initiatives are projects designed to bring about specific changes. Interventions are planned engagement with an environment from outside it designed to realise specified intentions. Following this differentiation of the terms, the subject of this research is an initiative, which was a project designed to enhance institutional development and teachers' professional development in a certain educational context. However, change is discussed in this chapter in a loose term that covers all possible forms of attempts or acts to achieve modification of status quo. This sections addresses a variety of issues: characteristics of change, strategies for change, change process and sustainability.

### *Characteristics of Change*

Change has multiple characteristics. A number of educators emphasise the importance of perceptual change over behavioural change. Hardy (1989) defines change as a synonym for learning, which indicates his perception of change as a deliberate action for improvement. He argues that attitudinal change is fundamental and is more important than behavioural change. He suggests that a change in attitude can bring about an age of new discovery, new enlightenment and new freedom. It may lead to much more learning than hours of exercises and change. Anley (1993) expressed a similar view that real change involves changes in conception and role behaviour and that successful implementation depends on what teachers do and think. Price (1988) also argues that reform of education is not simply reform of the school system but reform of the behaviour and thinking of the wider social teaching-learning process that guides moral-political ideas and behaviour. Schein (1970) also considers the kinds of changes in beliefs, attitudes, and values as 'central' or 'deep' in the process of unlearning something before something new can be learned. Evervard and Morris (1990) also give more weight to belief change.

Change as a complex process has been much discussed in the literature on change (e.g. Fullan, 1982; 1991; 1999 and Scott, 2000). Fullan (1991) argues that change is

not an event but an ongoing process of organisational and individual learning. He uses an analogy of roller-coaster to describe educational change process. It means that change is technically simple and socially complex. It involves dealing with a mix of factors both within and beyond our control, and it unfolds in a cyclical not linear fashion. It means that the change process is always to some extent uncertain, and that change tends to have unpredictable outcomes, and different outcomes in different places. It is a time-consuming and complex process, which can operate at different levels. Scott (2000) echoes this view and suggests that the temptation to pre-package innovations or to develop them in isolation from each other should be avoided. Brown and Duguid (1991) also recognise that change is processual – innovations are likely to change as they are developed and can lead to unintended consequences. Everard and Morris (1990) also highlight the complexities of change processes, which are caused by constraints posed by established conventions, norms and beliefs, and thus make the change process more complicated.

With a view of an intervention as managing meaning, Trowler and Knight (2001) define it as a continuous and dynamic process, which makes it a far-from-simple or easy task. In addition, change will always be interpreted, 'read' by those on the ground; and not simply 'received' from others higher in the organisation. This would make the process more complicated and time-consuming than that is hoped for. Trowler et al (2002) also contend that rational, linear understandings of change have only limited usability since change involves change, in other words, initial plans and visions themselves change as they are implemented and adopted. This view is echoed by Nwakoby and Lewin (1991) in their statement that time is necessary for change to become established.

### *Strategies for Change*

The importance of employing appropriate strategies has received much attention. As Trowler et al (2003) comment, haphazard approaches to change are likely to be frustrating.

Five versions of change strategies emerged from the literature. Bennis et al (1970) recognise three well-known strategies, which are described as *power-coercive*, *rational-empirical* and *normative-re-educative*.

The first strategy in Bennis et al's formulation, *the power-coercive approach* (also termed as political-administrative approach, or centre-periphery) is a strategy based on the application of power in some form to push through a change. It has as its basic assumption that individuals change when formalised authority and power are imposed on them. It views that real change happens through change in laws and regulations, where there are sanctions for non-compliance, and rewards for compliance.

The second, *the rational-empirical approach* assumes that individuals are rational and change in response to trustworthy information relating to their own self-interest. It perceives self-interest in a proposed change and assumes that people will be convinced through logical argument and will respond accordingly. It views real that change comes about through effective communication about the innovation and its benefits, with practical demonstration of the new technique and provision of the necessary resources.

The last, *the normative-re-educative approach* assumes that any major change to a system is a complex social phenomenon and will necessitate a change in the values, norms and beliefs of that system. Individuals change when group social pressures realign their beliefs and behaviour. This approach endorses collaboration and negotiation. It argues that real change happens when significant formal and informal groups are identified and helped to explore the implications of the innovation for themselves, examining and changing hostile attitudes through group discussion and training, developing a 'critical mass' of support for change.

The three approaches have their respective strengths and limitations. Kennedy (1987) finds that a power-coercive strategy has been frequently used in INSET programmes, especially in centralised systems, while a rational-empirical strategy is often in the



form of seminar, newsletters and resources centre that diffuse information about research and materials. He considers the normative-re-educative strategy as the one that offers the greatest potential with its emphasis on active participation and involvement. He perceives it as an approach which is concerned not only with the adoption of a specific innovation, but with the process of development that individuals experience as a result of involvement, and which can lead to a continuing interest in further change and innovation.

The shortcomings of the three approaches also received comments. The problems with the power-coercive approach, as Bennis et al point out, are that the use of power and authority often leads to subversive factors or use of countervailing power, resulting in conflict and hostility. Another weakness, as Trowler et al (2003: 15) recognised, is that it directs action on lines that do not match reality too closely. The weaknesses of the rational-empirical approach include the problem that the real world and people are not purely 'rational'. There are competing values and 'rationalities' which lead to conflict of interest. The common weakness of these two approaches, as Kennedy (1987) reported, is that they are not sufficient to effect the change in belief that is necessary for long-lasting change in the classroom. The drawbacks of the normative-re-educative approach are that group norms are not easily influenced, and often small groups within an organisation cannot 'go it alone'. Also, even committed groups cannot overcome lack of rewards or shortage of resources.

Another three different models of innovation proposed by Havelock (1971) have some similarities with those of Bennis et al. The first is the *research, development and diffusion model (RD and D)* which sees change as essentially a rational process. It roughly corresponds to the empirical-rational category of Bennis et al (1970). It is dependent on research, or empirical investigation to make a case for introducing change which everyone will then be convinced as it is so clearly and demonstrably right.



The second model Havelock describes is the *problem-solving approach*. The methodology this model advocates is to derive solutions from classroom research. This model corresponds to the normative re-educative model. It involves a process of getting people used to new ways of thinking and acting in order to deal with an identified problem, on which all are agreed. Similar to normative-re-educative model, it places a strong emphasis on participation in the identification of the problem and the development of plans for its solution.

The third model Havelock proposes is that of *social interaction*. It is concerned with developing and exploiting already existing mechanisms within a society to deal with change. It is based upon the assumption that the most critical factor in the diffusion of an innovation in education is social relationships. It emphasises the accepted forms of social relationships within the community.

Havelock's approaches to change encountered different reactions from two educational researchers. Fullan (1991), a believer in change as a chaotic and unpredictable process, as has already been noted previously, rejects the RD and D model and adopts a process approach which seeks to combine the problem-solving and social interaction models. Different to Fullan, Henrichsen (1989) endorses RD and D model, but suggests a linking of this with Havelock's models of social interaction and problem-solving.

A set of two opposing strategies is critiqued by Walton (1970): *power strategy* and *attitude change strategy*. The former focuses on building a power base and manipulation of power, whereas the latter involves overtures of love and trust and gestures of good will intended to bring about attitude change and concomitant behaviour change.

As Walton claimed, both power and attitude change strategies would encounter leadership dilemmas in terms of a variety of paradoxical issues: the degrees of overstatement of objectives versus de-emphasising differences, internal cohesion versus accurate differentiation, emphasis on power to coerce versus trust, ambiguity

versus predictability, threat versus conciliation, impact versus catharsis, coalition versus inclusion. Walton recommended an overall strategy which integrates the advantages of both strategies to cope with innovations. Distinctive from other researchers, he also considers the power strategy as necessary and legitimate based on the advantages of power strategy. He argues that the substantive gains obtained by the power strategy in the longer run may result in better affective relations despite the temporary setbacks in terms of the level of friendliness and trust between the groups. The power strategy can lead to more favourable attitudinal bonds through the mechanism of dissonance reduction. It may achieve attitude change as well as substantive concessions, particularly for a currently underprivileged group. The objective of attitude change is more likely to be achieved at a later date if one engages in the power tactics initially.

Lewin and Stuart (1991) provide a summary of six different approaches to innovation with distinct characteristics: *systems, bureaucratic, scientific, problem-solving, diffusionist and charismatic*. The attributes of these approaches are presented in Table 3. 1.

**Table 3.1 Six approaches to innovation summarised by Lewin and Stuart (1991)**

Approach	Attributes
Systems	Commitment to achieve goals shared by system and subsystem members.
Bureaucratic	Static, more administrative than educational, hierarchical organisational structures, information flowing down the system rather up it or across it from substructure to substructure.
Scientific	Rational, basically linear sequence; consumers are essentially passive and rational.
Problem-solving	Clients' needs are perceived as paramount; problem diagnosis as the first step.
Diffusionist	Personal contacts as central to dissemination of innovations.
Charismatic	Conviction overrides research; role of influential positions.

Some approaches in Lewin and Stuart's description can be related to Bennis et al's model (power-coercive, rational-empirical and normative-re-educative). *The systems approach* is akin to the rational-empirical approach in the way that they both perceive initiation of innovation as resulting from changed external conditions or mismatches between input, throughput and output. They both view the development of an innovation as a rational-empirical process, taken step by step, and guided by logic, trial and feedback. *The bureaucratic approach* is associated with

power-coercive strategies for implementation. They both value capitalising on the advantages and disadvantages of bureaucratic organisations. *The scientific approach* is most adequately represented in Havelock's research, development, diffusion approach and relates to the rational-empirical approach. *The problem-solving approach* is closest to the normative-re-educative approach of Chin and Benne and Havelock's problem-solving. It emphasises mobilising internal resources, self-initiated and self-applied innovations. *The diffusionist approach* relates to normative-re-educative approach that deems personal contacts as central to the spread of innovation.

There exist another two contrasting approaches, top-down and bottom-up approaches (Trowler, 1998 and Trowler et al, 2003)). The top-down model is viewed as a rationalistic and managerialist strategy (Trowler, 1998), as a 'forward mapping' (Elmore, 1982) or 'fidelity' perspective (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977).

The top-down approach has encountered criticisms by a number of researchers. Trowler (1998) commented that this model is based on the assumption that given a number of prerequisites, policy could be successfully implemented by direction from above, however, in reality 'implementation gap' is very likely to occur between policy objectives and policy outcomes despite its well-conceived planning because they are unable to accommodate existing structural constraints (Becher and Kogan, 1980: 146).

Barrett and Fudge (1981: 4) pinpoint the pitfalls of the top-down approach in co-ordination, control or obtaining 'compliance' with policy. It treats implementers as 'agents' for policy makers and tends to play down issues such as power relations, conflicting interests and value systems between individuals and agencies responsible for making policy and those responsible for taking action.

Trowler's reservations about top-down approach include six aspects (1998: 104): too much attention given to the goals of central actors (ignoring the adaptive strategies of those lower down); unrealistic conditions for effective implementation; lack of

discretion to cope with uncertainty; ignoring the unintended consequences of policies, multiple, conflicting or vague objectives; and the artificial distinction between policy formulation and its implementation.

In contrast with the top-down approach, the bottom-up approach, termed as 'backward mapping', 'mutual adaptation' and 'multilateralism' (Trowler, 1998), sees the process of policy implementation resulting from the multiple interactions of numerous actors, each with their own agenda, definition of the situation, perceived interests and so on. Trowler notes that it highlights the need for an understanding of the nature of the ground-level interpretations of, and responses to, policy. In this it differs markedly from the concerns of the top-down approach with its focus on the process by which government (or other large organisation) executes policy in order to influence delivery locally. Sabatier (1986) and Marsh and Rhodes (1992) identify four pitfalls of the bottom-up approach: overestimating the discretion of the lower-level actors and failing to recognise sufficiently the constraints on their behaviour, lack of explanations of the sources of actors' definitions of the situation, perceptions of their own interests etc, lack of recognition of the upper levels, and false engagement in 'implementation analysis'.

The division between top-down and bottom-up approaches is considered as a rather simplistic way of characterising thinking about policy change and its implementation. Trowler (1998) adhering to the view of implementation as evolution, attempted to synthesise the top-down and bottom-up approaches by taking account of both polar perspectives. He argued that the relationship between them should be one of dialogue, negotiation and learning from experience on the basis of empathy and mutual understanding.

A summary of the different models proposed by these researchers is presented in Table 3.2 below. The approaches that can be related with each other are in the same rows.



**Table 3.2 Summary of change strategies**

Bennis et al (1970)	Havelock (1971)	Walton (1970)	Lewin & Stuart (1991)	Trowler (1998)
Power-coercive		Power strategy	Bureaucratic	Top-down
Rational-empirical	RD and D		Systems Scientific	
Normative-re-educative	Problem-solving Social interaction	Attitude change strategy	Problem-solving Diffusionist	
			Charismatic	
				Bottom-up

Three points need to be emphasised, as Trowler et al (2003) have recognised. First, common-sense thinking about change is fit for some purposes but can be very limiting. Second, different approaches are needed depending on purpose, audience and setting. Third, workgroups are particularly effective in generating and maintaining outcomes of change.

Two additional points are emphasised by a number of other educators. The first is the creation of knowledge as a strategy for change proposed by Eraut (1994), Hargreaves (1997) and Fullan (1999). Compared with the previously mentioned ones, this strategy is more concerned with incremental improvement of the collective environment as a long-term goal instead of being innovation-driven. This process is imbedded in the cultural construction and change. Eraut (1994) highlights the role of unsystematised, chance personal knowledge (tacit knowledge in Fullan's term) in the creation of professional knowledge. Hargreaves (1998) proposes a far more central role for the teaching profession to make larger shifts to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, and he places teachers at the centre of knowledge creation about pedagogy. Fullan (1999) places teachers' knowledge creation within the institution as most central to the processes of change. He emphasises the essential importance of the conversion of tacit to explicit knowledge, which may be difficult since tacit knowledge is by its nature elusive, for useful ideas to be retained and shared within the organisation. He attaches much importance to the leadership at the middle level in the formation and sharing of shared knowledge to develop coherence between tacit and explicit knowledge, bringing together individual, group and overall collective



thinking. In this process 'groupthink' should be avoided, which is characterised by uncritical thinking and deprivation of individuality.

The second point is the provision of support, in Craft's view (2000), as an important strategy in creating successful change. Support, according to Craft, will help people come out of the change dip and enable them to acquire new knowledge and to develop new attitudes and skills. Ongoing training and other professional work integrated with teachers' practice is an important ingredient. Additionally developing school culture is fundamental to successful change since it is conducive to both individual and institutional level.

### *Change Process*

Once a change is initiated with certain strategies utilised, it will undergo a duration of time which varies from context to context and go through a series of phases.

A number of researchers have proposed differing change phases from different perspectives. Fullan (1982) looks at change in terms of time sequence and sees it as involving four continuous phases: initiation (when the decision to adopt a change is made), implementation (when the change is first put into practice), continuation or institutionalisation (whether the change becomes embedded as part and parcel of school life) and outcome (the effects, positive and negative, of the change). Adams and Chen (1981) focus on the tasks in different stages and identify five stages: problem identification, specification of solution, trial, diffusion, and consolidation or rejection. Trowler et al (2003) stress considerations that need to be taken into account and identify pre-adoption (situational analysis), adoption (decision-making) and implementation (change in practice).

Despite the difference in their foci of attention, a commonality obvious in the three models is that they all consider implementation ('trial', in Adams and Chen's term) as an important phase.



A note of warning is that all these models are likely to create a misleading impression that change is a linear and smooth process in which these phases are undergone one after another. In actual practice, some phases take longer than other ones and require more endeavours depending on specific situations. Or some phases may not be existent, for example, continuation and outcome can be missing due to the short-lived impact or even worse on account of a failure to carry through innovations.

Several researchers address change process from change recipients' point of view. Rogers (1983) proposes five steps: a) gaining knowledge about an innovation, b) being persuaded of its value, c) making a preliminary decision to adopt the innovation, d) implementing their decision to adopt, and e) confirming their decision to continue using the innovation. Schen (1970) describes change process as including three stages: unfreezing (emotional resistance due to the need for an alteration of the present stable equilibrium which supports the present behaviour and attitudes), changing (seeking out, processing, and utilisation of information for the purpose of achieving new perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour) and refreezing (integrating new responses into the ongoing personality and into key emotional relationships to lead ultimately to changes which may be considered to be stable). Kelman (1970) sees change process as involving compliance (accepting influence from another person from a group to achieve a favourable reaction from the other), identification (adopting behaviour from another person or group) and internalisation (accepting influence to align his behaviour with his value system).

The foregoing discussions on views of change process reveal two major perspectives. One perspective is represented by Fullan, Rogers and Adams and Chen and Trowler et al, who look at change process from the perspective of those trying to make change happen, i.e. change agents or change implementers. Whereas the other perspective is held by Schein and Kelman who view change from the perspective of those most directly affected, i.e. target groups. Whichever perspective is taken, they both recognise that change is disruptive, resource-consuming, and adversely implemented (Lewin and Stuart, 1991). It is a process that involves destabilisation

(Fullan, 1991), also referred to as 'the cycle of educational failure, the predictable pathology of educational change' (Stoll and Fink, 1996: 143). It is in this period that most change fails to make progress beyond very early implementation. Turbulence often emerges as a result of resistance to a change. Consequently, it is likely to adversely affect the equitable delivery of a service at an acceptable level of quality. In the change process the individual will not accept it in toto, but modify them to some degree so that they will fit his own unique situation. Many interests have to be balanced, mobilised and reconciled. Meanings are renegotiated and purposes modified to reflect and promote outcomes that are durable and represent real rather than 'cosmetic changes' (Lewin and Stuart, 1991). In Fullan's (1999) terms, change is a complex, chaotic and painful process, which is characterised by conflict and diversity, chaos and unpredictability, emotional intelligence and collaborative cultures. It is often the case that innovations intended to make things better may make things worse. Nonetheless, as Lewin and Stuart recognised (1991), in some circumstances this is a necessary short-term cost that should be weighed alongside others.

The extent of evolution of change is also an important issue. Sometimes a change is introduced and is developed faithfully or with 'fidelity' (Fullan, 1982). Sometimes both the change itself and those using it change together in a process of 'mutual adaptation' (Craft, 2000). There may also be a point when the change has been so altered as to be unrecognisable. This, in Fullan's view (1999), may be inevitable in that the creation of knowledge by reference to the internal and external environment is integral to change.

### *Sustainability*

The previous discussions concern a number of researchers' views on attributes of change and its process. The focus of their attention is mainly on relatively immediate change and one cycle of change. Nevertheless, numerous change experiences have indicated that change is not meant to achieve the success of that change as a dead end. In this sense change is a never-ending enterprise. As McGovern (1999) argues, the real goal of any English language teaching (ELT) project must be to transform

the people and the institutions involved so that they are able to adapt and to diffuse not just the immediate innovation but innovations that have not yet even been dreamed of.

Therefore, sustainability of change appears as an important issue. Wal and Jickling (2002) equate sustainability with growth. Longer-term sustainability does not mean simply replacing old paradigms. But rather, as Bosselmann (2001) argued, it is vital to reflect and transcend the tradition. He suggested a systematic approach to sustainability which considers ecological, economic and social aspects as well as the interconnections between them. He views sustainability as demanding the continuity of life and life-supporting ecosystems.

A quote from Leopold (1949) can best illustrate the essence of sustainability: ‘ A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it does otherwise’. Change for the better and minimal disruption of the status quo are regarded as important criteria for sustainability.

Enhancing sustainability, as Trowler et al (2003) suggest, requires various actions from those to get change started. It thus entails change agents’ appreciation of the variety and avoiding adopting a ‘one-size-fits-all’ theory of change.

Sustainability is not without its problems. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the concept of sustainability, Wal and Jickling (2002) identify pitfalls of a sustainability-focused agenda. They perceive the idea of sustainability as conceptually flawed. They identify two problems with the concept. The first is that literally it means to keep going continuously. Yet, it provides no inherent clues about how one should mediate between contesting claims between advocates of incompatible value systems. The second is that education for sustainability runs counter to prevailing conceptions of education. An emphasis on sustainability, or sustainable development might favour one body of thought, while hinder the inclusion of other emerging environmental thought that might be equally worthwhile.



Measurement of sustainability is also an important issue. Bosselmann (2001) describes five categories of indicators in environmental and interdisciplinary sustainability, which may be insightful to other educational fields: simple indicators (singular features that can be identified by directly observing and measuring them), aggregate indicators (combinations of features with a specific content), descriptive indicators (those that are designed to determine a situation that is not characterised by an addition or combination of individual features, but by relationships and interconnections), descriptive-analytical indicators ('objective' features that characterise the present situation of a system) and normative indicators ('subjective', value-oriented features necessary for the ethical, political or economic evaluation of a system). He emphasised that indicators are not precise data, but selected criteria to identify the main characteristics of a system. They are designed to help understanding whether a system is 'healthy' or not. A note of warning Wal and Jickling (2002) suggest is that there is no single right version or a best way for sustainability due to various norms, values and interests that may be in conflict. They explain that the concept of sustainability is related to the social, economic, cultural, ethical and spiritual domain of our existence. It does not lend itself to unilateral, linear planning or a reductionist scientific paradigm.

Cultural dimension poses as an important consideration with regard to longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural take-ups. Thaman (2002) highlighted the importance of an awareness of a cultural gap in his discussion of the indigenous conventions and the 'imported' or 'imposed' assumptions, goals and values from different cultural contexts. He argued that sustainability requires a new culture to be rooted in people's cultural values. Therefore, in his view, a move to reclaim indigenous knowledge system is integral to sustainable development efforts. He claimed that if the values and goals of development were closer to those of the community in which development was to take place, the chance for success and sustainability would seem to be greater, otherwise cultural resistance would occur. He further argued for an open mind to alternative assumptions, values and beliefs in addition to appreciation of indigenous ways so that the environment would be not only 'comfortable, but also culturally and environmentally sustainable'.



## **Enhancing Longer-term Sustainability of INSET Initiatives**

The previous section has covered a number of substantive issues regarding management of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. It first reviews perspectives on change. The overriding message is that change is pervasive, unpredictable and never-ending. The second issue concerns strategies for change, which covered five models respectively proposed by Bennis et al (1970), Havelock (1971), Walton (1970), Lewin and Stuart (1991) and Trowler (1998). The third was change process, which discussed change phases from two different perspectives, one was that of innovators, and the other one that of change recipients. The fourth was perspectives about sustainability. Sustaining longer-term sustainability involves consideration of and striking a balance between the milieu where innovations happen and innovations themselves.

This section will focus on what might be done to increase the chances of success of cross-cultural INSET initiatives and to enhance their prospect of longer-term sustainability. Four dimensions are included, including 1) roles and actions at the micro level, 2) role and actions at the meso level and the macro level, 3) interactions between the three parties and 4) cultural continuity and adaptation.

### **Roles and actions at the micro level**

#### *Adopting a client-centred, purposive and evolutionary approach to INSET*

Numerous empirical studies have converged on the importance of assessing and taking into account the needs of participants in the planning and conduct of INSET. Lewin and Stuart (1991) suggest client-centred, purposive and evolutionary change which values participation, consultation and negotiation of meanings rather than prescription, autocracy and imposition of solutions to problems that are not grounded in the needs of clients. They argue that innovations where consultation with clients is marginalized and their interests and motivations are not recognised rarely lead to durable change. Yat-ming (1991) claims that top-down and power-coercive approach is likely to lead to the situation where 'the decision was transmitted downwards to

the school system as a decree ... and school teachers were perceived as passive adopters faithfully conforming to official requirements'. Waters and Vilches (2001) highlight the need for analysing a range of needs in implementing an ELT innovation to maximise the potential for adoption and to develop ownership of the innovation. They identify four main interlocking areas of needs in the form of matrix on the vertical axis (in relation to levels of needs – foundation-building and potential-realising) and the horizontal axis (in relation to areas of needs concerned with curriculum development, teaching learning, trainer learning and ELT management). They emphasise the need to realise a gradual transition to the lower-level of needs to the higher level of needs. The importance of the lower one cannot be ignored or under-rated. A sound approach to the curriculum innovation process must be based on attempting to integrate both main levels of needs.

### *Establishing collaborative cultures at the team level*

Organisational cultures are varied. Handy (1978) describe four major cultures which attach importance to different aspects in the organisations: power culture, role culture, task culture and person culture. The power culture is characterised by a strong authority figure at the centre who tends to dominate all decisions and to whom deference is given. The role culture values the role that people play and assumes that their position is more important than the individuals who occupy them. The task culture has the goals of the organisation as the main points of focus and all energy is directed towards fulfilling them. The person culture respects preoccupations, talents and ambitions of individuals within the culture. The nature of organisations is determined by the dominant culture embodied in them implicitly or explicitly.

Establishing collaborative cultures and encouraging the development of a shared vision is recommended as an important route to innovation implementation by a large number of researchers (West-Burnham, 1992; Seldin 1989; Rice & Austin, 1991; Lucas, 1991; Hargreaves, 1992; Senge, 1990; and Fullan, 1993). Hargreaves (1992: 233) defines collaborative culture as one where teachers are united than divided. It is not formally organised or bureaucratic in nature; nor are they mounted

just for specific projects or events. It is not strings of one-shot deals, but rather it is constitutive of, absolutely central to, teachers' daily work. It fosters and builds upon qualities of openness, trust and support between teachers and their colleagues. It capitalises on the collective expertise and endeavours of the teaching community. It acknowledges the wider dimensions of teachers' lives outside the classroom and the school, blurring the boundaries between in-school and out-of-school, public and private, professional and personal – grounding projects for development and change in a realistic and respectful appreciation of teachers' broader world.

Trowler (1998) emphasises the need to conceptualise organisations as open systems and cultural configurations within them as multiple, complex and shifting. Trowler et al (2003) underscore the importance of fostering cultures and structures that will increase capacity to innovate and respond creatively to external change forces. Green (1991) and Knight & Trowler (2000, 2001) stress the role of leadership at meso level is perceived as an essential condition for success in the implementation process. Knight and Trowler (2000) argue that desirable change is most likely to be achieved in collective and collaborative ways. Hopkins (2001) holds a similar view that the chances of sustaining change seem to be better when it is 'home grown' in a team or department that has the change-friendly cultures.

Clashes were reported by Hargreaves (1992) in his research between how elementary teachers used their scheduled preparation time between high-school and elementary teacher cultures in the intermediate, middle-school setting in Canada. He proposed the need for fostering collaborative cultures of teaching in which teachers can learn from their peers, who share similar beliefs, values, habits and have to deal with similar demands and constraints. Brown and McIntyre (1982) also contend that little change is likely when individuals are expected to sustain their understanding, enthusiasm, and effort in isolation from others concerned to introduce such changes. Joyce (1989) argues for creating an ethos that vertical and horizontal isolation and separation of roles will be replaced by integration and collaboration. Ackoff (1981) also proposes three operating principles of interactive planning – participation, continuity and co-ordination and integration. Rosenholtz (1989) stresses the

importance of collaboration in his definition of learning-enriched schools as apposed to learning impoverished ones. Hopkins (1987) views collaboration among all school personnel as central because it focuses attention on the process of strengthening the school's capacity to deal with change.

In the attempts to establish collaborative cultures, the pre-existing values and attitudes of individuals need to be understood and addressed (Trowler, 1998). Individuals and groups are far from 'empty-headed'. They have values and attitudes which are often deeply rooted in early and later socialisation and reinforced by daily recurrent behaviours and these are used to facilitate critical thinking and deploy arguments in support of their point of view.

Collaborative culture is sought for at the expense of individuality and disagreement. It does not attempt to suppress competing standpoints to impose a monoculture for management purposes. On the contrary, as Hargreaves (1992: 226) points out, collaborative culture does not merely require broad agreement on educational values, but it also tolerates disagreement, and to some extent actively encourages it within those limits. Trowler (1998) also recognises the necessity of allowing for co-existence of differentiation and conflict with coherence and consensus.

### *Capitalising on the role of leadership*

Given the fact that a collaborative culture does not arise by a kind of emotional spontaneous combustion as Hargreaves (1992) argues, and that it has to be created and sustained, leadership is especially important to foster a supportive and collaborative environment. A number of researchers have explored ways to optimise the role of leadership. Hargreaves (1992), acknowledging the difficulty of creating and sustaining due to the pressures and constraints that normally come with teachers' work, argues for contrived collegiality as a route to move from an individualised or balkanised teacher culture to a collaborative one. It is characterised by a set of formal, specific bureaucratic procedures to increase the attention being given to joint teacher planning and consultation.



A note of warning was sounded by Hargreaves in his advocacy of an attempt at contrived collegiality. First, like attempts to introduce language unity by legal statute or other administrative contrivance, contrived collegiality cannot legislate a collaborative culture into existence, nor can it provide an adequate 'instant' substitute for such a culture with all the time and care that is needed to help that culture evolve and develop. Second, contrived collegiality may sometimes affront the dignity of teachers by failing to recognise what is already going on collegially in a school. In other words, contrived collegiality may not only fail to develop collaborative cultures but actually impede the development of those which are already evolving. Third, contrived collegiality can lead to a proliferation of unwanted meetings so that not only might teachers eventually suffer from administrative overload, but the small spaces of informal life in a school may get eaten away. It might lead to intruding upon, reorganising and undermining the spontaneity of informal, open, personal talk between teachers and their colleagues; and also undermining the vital interpersonal foundations on which collaborative cultures rest. Therefore precautions need to be taken to avert such situations.

Likewise, Seldin (1989) emphasised the importance of developing a culture that seeks to improve teachers and teachers' needs. Of the thirteen characteristics of effective faculty development system in his summary, he gave prominence to a collaborative culture and the role of teachers.

The impacts of organisations on faculty morale and motivation to teach are addressed by Rice and Austin (1991) in their research on the academic workplace and efforts to evaluate programmes aimed at strengthening teaching. They argue for striking a balance between cultivating a distinctive and coherent culture and seeking for openness, a sense of community and critical thought. They also acknowledge the role of participatory leadership to achieve managerial effectiveness. They found that every one of the ten colleges they investigated with high morale had leaders who were aggressively participatory. They also advocate interactions among faculty and administrators who are committed to teaching because through such interactions,



faculty can develop communities and networks within which they affirm each other in the role of teacher and provide an example to others.

The need for active leadership is discussed in depth by Green (1991) from a different perspective. He claims that in academia, leaders can influence the organisational culture to produce change. Leaders are in a position to shape them through words and deeds. The general message conveyed in his proposition is that administrators need to make careful judgements about exercising leadership and need to take a careful reading of their environments to orchestrate the process of change. At the same time, Green (1991) acknowledges that leaders' influence is subject to institutional values and norms. If there is a mismatch or if leaders violate the institution's cultural norms, conflict generally ensues.

Likewise, Lucas (1991) argues in his survey of over 1,000 department chairs (1991) that the department chair is in the best position to create a climate in which teaching is valued – one that makes it possible for faculty to increase their knowledge about how adults learn and what teaching strategies are effective (Lucas, 1991: 67). To be effective, a culture is required that both values and supports leadership and development.

Team building and development is the focus of attention of West-Burnham (1992) in addressing the role of leadership. He characterises effective teams as explicit and shared values, situational leadership, pride in the team, clear task, feedback and review, openness and candour, lateral communication, collaborative decision making and emphasis on action (1992: 144-47). Effective teams result from empowered individuals learning to collaborate so that individual knowledge, skills and qualities are deployed to maximum effect. He describes it as circling the earth in a space shuttle. The angle of re-entry is crucial – too steep (or enthusiastic) and the team is burnt up in the rich atmosphere of colleagues' cynicism; too shallow and the team bounces off the atmosphere, doomed to circle the real world and become management consultants. Again, like in team building, the role of leadership is a crucial factor to make team development happen.

Acknowledging that effective teams do not happen by chance, West-Burnham (1992) argues that effective teams have to be created deliberately and managed systematically. The central principle in team building, he argues, is to minimise the time spent forming and storming, to make norming as powerful as possible and to devote the maximum amount of time to performing. Team-building needs to be triggered off by an awareness of the collective self-image and a desire to manage what is there effectively. A coherent self-image emerges therefore, not only as an advantage for the progression of individuals, but for the team itself (Belbin, 1994).

These above-mentioned researchers focus their attention on the leadership in general terms. Moving one step further, Busher and Harris (2000) discussed in depth the importance of different levels of leadership. Their proposition is in tune with the views of Fullan (1993) and Hopkins et al (1994 and 1997) that attach much importance to focusing change efforts at different levels within the organisation. They further argue for the centrality of leadership at middle management level. Trowler (1998) stresses the role of senior management for goal setting, and at the same time he emphasises the role of the meso level, i.e. departmental responsibility, which is often ignored, as well as the micro (individual) level and the macro (the institutional or above) level. He suggests 'a change sandwich' that entails consensus above and pressure below, rather than simply flow from above.

### *Upgrading trainer expertise*

The criteria for qualified trainers are also recognised as one of the major factors that influence the effect of INSET programmes. Rossner (1988) identified that the first crucial factor is the professional expertise of trainers, including their content knowledge, professional experience, education, qualifications and personal skills, personalities and predominant teaching styles. Duff (1988) pointed out that qualities of trainers are different from those of teachers. Trainers must be able not only to explain what they do but exactly why they do it. This distinction is depicted in Freeman's (1987) statement: 'To be a teacher, you must know the technique. To be a trainer, you must know the technique, know why it is effective, be able to articulate or convey that understanding to others, and know how it relates to other aspects of

language teaching.'

However, this does not mean that any particular characteristic or combination of characteristics is the best. Duff (1988) claims that different courses in different circumstances for different participants are likely to require different combinations of skills and characteristics. Much will depend on the role the trainer will be assigned during the course, the course aims and the prevailing ideology.

Another important factor in selecting new trainers, in Rossner's (1988) view, is the make-up and balance of the existing team. It is crucial that member of the team should be able to work harmoniously and consistently together in planning, reviewing and administering the course. On the other hand, diversity of styles, personality and points of view are needed. Consensus is built upon respect for individuality and negotiation.

Additionally, Rossner (1988) argues that teacher trainers should maintain a simultaneous role as teachers. They need to keep in touch with the first-hand experience of coping with full responsibility for real learners in real learning environments using up-to-date materials.

### *Conducting research related to INSET*

Given the fact that too much time goes into developing educational reforms and too little effort is given to monitoring and enhancing such innovations as they are put into practice, Scott (2000) argues for the need to make research and change in practice more consistently interlaced. It is of vital importance to cash in on appropriate measures and tools to identify what aspects of the development are working well in practice and what require enhancement. The results of such undertaking will help identify problematic areas and adjust strategies.

## **Roles and actions at the meso and macro levels**

### *Providing administrative and professional support*

The importance of and need for support for teachers' CPD are well recognised. Kelly and McDiarmid (2002) argue that educators and policy community must undertake a focused effort to redefine professional development as integral to teacher quality and thus student achievement. Stenstaker (1998) points out that strong external pressure without support in the adapting organisations appears to lead to purely symbolic adaptations. Dean (1991) suggests that it is important to try to find a balance between the needs of the institution and the aspirations of all work within it. It must be integrated into both the formal organisation of the school day and calendar, as well as integrated into the culture of schools as a critically important, on-going function of the faculty. An awareness of professional development as a mechanism needs to be raised in administrators for long-term capability building, rather than a quick fix to raise test scores in the next accountability cycle. Kelly and McDiarmid (2002) claim that failure to do so will only propagate the fractured approach to planning professional development found in most schools.

As far as actions to be taken are concerned, Dove (1986: 270) recommended sustaining high working conditions, materials and equipment to keep teachers well motivated. He also acknowledged two main challenges to overcome. One is to create flexibility in procedures for the supply and distribution of services, materials and equipment to schools so that local initiative can fill the gaps when routine procedures break down. This has to be done at the same time as applying sufficiently rigorous mechanism of accountability. The other challenge is to create good channels of communication between administration and teachers. Lengthy bureaucratic procedures which cause delays to schools' requests for action, or even no response at all, would create disillusion amongst even the most energetic of teachers. Yuan (2002) suggests integration of in-service teacher training with pre-service teacher education as a form of support to teacher's professional development. This would help establish links between in-service teacher training with pre-service training to make them



interactive and teacher education a life-long process.

### *Empowering the 'insiders'*

The importance of co-ordination of various parties should be acknowledged. The role of 'insiders', especially the main personnel, the team that undertake a training course should be recognised. The empowerment of the insiders must be every course's top priority. Their expertise and experience in the work, their commitment and endeavours should be appreciated and rewarded in the form of maximal support from administrators. As Fullan (1991) suggests, we should seek to transfer power and responsibility for the conduct of a project as quickly and as fully as possible to the insiders. Otherwise low morale would directly undermine the effect of the course. In the case of cross-cultural take-ups, it is of vital importance to empower local change makers as early as possible because the ultimate goal is to enable them to manage all kinds of contingencies autonomously.

One of the main agendas in the effort to empower insiders, in Dove's view (1986) is to enhance trainer training because the expertise of teacher trainers is one of the most critical factors in improving teacher quality and systematic measures to provide for the training of teachers. He acknowledged that the recruitment and training of teacher trainers was an important but neglected area of policy. He identified various problems that needed to be tackled. Teacher trainers in universities tend to lack prestige relative to other academics. Those involved in in-service extension work often have ambiguous status and poor career mobility. There is a danger that teacher trainers may stay in the same type of post until retirement, becoming increasingly isolated from the real conditions and needs of teachers in schools. He also stressed the need for support from all departments concerned. He emphasised that teacher trainers need initial orientations and systematic opportunities for professional enrichment, including working contact with curriculum developers, examination experts and, above all, classrooms, teachers and children.



Sharing the same view, McGovern (1999) proposes that training is crucial for teachers to acquire essential skills and knowledge in various areas: inter-personal; oral and written communication; cross-cultural awareness; an ability to handle project politics; negotiation; team-building; administration, budgeting and marketing

### *Harmonising individual and organisational needs*

Dealing with the relationship between individual and organisational needs effectively can be regarded as fulfilling dual purposes of facilitating teachers' professional development and enhancing institutional development. As discussed previously on perspectives of CPD, the interdependent relationship between individual needs and institutional needs necessitates reconciliation of them. First of all, institutional needs should be addressed. Trowler et al (2003) point out that perception of change as institutional change would contribute to striking a balance between institutional and individual needs. Hounsell (1994) argued for a shift of focus of teacher training programmes on the needs and aspirations of individual members of staff to policy developments and strategic initiatives based on his assumption of staff development as a tool in the management of change.

However, it does not suggest that the role of the teachers can be overlooked. On the contrary there exists much support to the necessity of addressing individual needs. Goh (1999) proposed in a study of top-down reform in Malaysia that it is teachers who will determine whether innovations that have been adopted through top-down measures will eventually be carried out inside the classroom. Dean (1991) recognised the benefit of a collective professional development approach, whole-school INSET consisted in its recognising and reconciling individual and institutional needs and providing post-training follow-up activities for support. Ibrahim (1991) suggests encouraging intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of course participants, which, once their motivations are boosted and maintained, would eventually lead to the continuous development of their institutions. Effective means Ibrahim recommended for intrinsic motivation include providing course contents that are directly relevant to classroom tasks to help teachers solve their teaching problems; and those for

extrinsic motivation involve paying course participants an attractive rate of in-service course allowance, awarding certificates for course attendance, and ensuring that attendance and participation in courses are taken into account in teachers' promotions. Kirk (1988:48) argues that effective staff development activities presuppose not simply changes in individual teachers but changes in the institutions in which they work. Conversely, attempt at institutional change can only succeed to the extent that they entail changes in the professional practice of individuals.

### *Integrating top-down approaches with self-directed professional development*

As indicated earlier on in the discussions on change strategies, top-down approaches is one of the effective means to be utilised. However, it is not sensible to rely on top-down approaches alone because they may not be appropriate in all innovation contexts. The project approach which has been employed since the 1970s as an innovation strategy in ELT is a case in point. It is considered as too command-driven and too top-down.

Therefore, Clark (1992) proposes 'self-directed professional development' as the ultimate purpose of professional development, i.e. teachers' self-initiated, spontaneous endeavours to pursue their professional development. He provided three reasons for his argument. First, adult development is voluntary - no one can force a person to learn, change or grow. When adults feel that they are in control of a process of change that they have voluntarily chosen, they are much more likely to realise full value from it than when coerced into training situations in which they have little say about the timing, the process or the goals. Secondly, because each teacher is unique in important ways, it is impossible to create a single, centrally administered and planned programme of professional development that will meet everyone's needs and desires. Third, self-directed professional development is the way that the best teachers already operate. To make self-directed professional development happen as one of the routines in teachers' career, Hargreaves (1992) argues that teachers should think of themselves as designers. They must design themselves, and continue to revise, redesign, and learn from experience. The realisation of this entails boosting

teachers' intrinsic motivation in the long run instead of extrinsic motivation. Of course a supportive environment is a sine qua non for this to happen and to be sustained. Support in various forms and at differing levels is crucial.

### *Empowering teachers in their pursuit of their professional development*

The importance of schoolteachers in the implementation of innovation is emphasised by Fullan (1991) in his remarks 'educational change depends on what teachers do and think – it's as simple and as complex as that.' and 'A crucial factor in bringing about successful change involves providing opportunities for individuals to come to find meanings in the change.' His view incorporates teachers into the planning and design of professional developments. Hargreaves (1994: 11) also says, 'Teachers are not just technical learners. They are social learners too'. Scott (2000) argues that everyone is a leader of change in their own area of expertise and control. It is teachers who are the final arbiters of whether or not a proposed learning innovation actually gets implemented effectively with students, not the more senior staff to whom they report.

Decentralisation is perceived as necessary by a number of researchers. Daniels (1990) argues that decentralisation empowers teachers to design professional development activities customised to the local context, culture and professional needs. Sykes (1996) emphasises the need for devolution of authority for teacher professional development to teachers, who can make better-informed decisions regarding professional needs. Ball argues (1996) that teacher development is especially productive when teachers are in charge of the agenda and determine the focus and nature of the programme offered'. Tisher and Wideen (1990) also contend that in-service is found to be especially effective in those instances where teachers have some ownership of their professional development activities.

### *Coping with resistance from teachers*

As discussed previously on factors that affect change implementation, resistance is inevitable in any kinds of change process, therefore it should not be regarded as a

purely negative force. Klein (1970) viewed resistance as necessary and even desirable in more complex social systems. Nevertheless, he also acknowledged that resistance must be dealt with because successful innovation occurs only after initial resistances have been worked through. He suggested that it is sensible for the change agent to view the situation with a sympathetic understanding of what the defenders are seeking to protect, and either to modify the change itself or the strategy being used to achieve it. He also suggested the necessity of carrying out sustained efforts at innovation in which experimentation with new ideas can be followed by efforts at adapting or modifying them or fit them more smoothly into existing patterns until finally what was once an innovation is itself incorporated within an altered status quo.

Another two researchers provided their suggestions. Luxon (1994) underscored preparing teachers psychologically for the pain caused by change to help them cope with a hard time, both professionally and personally. Rinvold (1981) provided a variety of recommendations for working on trainee resistance in his reflections on his experience both as a teacher trainee and a teacher trainer: minimising trainee resistance to the trainer's personality, giving the trainees time to come to terms with their resistance to new ideas, protecting the 'resistant' from the 'acceptant' in feedback sessions, helping trainees to become conscious of their resistance and to formulate it, and valourising the trainees' own knowledge. Anley (1993) acknowledged that innovations would not succeed unless teachers believed that they would ultimately bear fruit and be worth the personal investment.

## **Interactions between the three levels**

### *Facilitating communication and coordination between various parties*

As Dean (1991) noted, the management of professional development is inevitably affected by the relationship between external and internal factors. The importance of a supportive culture and coordination between a range of parties concerned is of considerable significance. Constant dialogues are necessary. Klein (1970) argues that in centralised systems, top support for an idea is almost a necessity if it is to move



towards becoming an innovation. Dean (1991) finds that at the institutional level, a fundamental responsibility will rest with the school management to create conditions for both teachers' professional and personal development as well as institutional development. At the project team level, McGovern (1999) contends that the coordination between local and expatriate staff is a major issue to ensure a harmonious and supportive environment. The interactions among all the parties are a must to ensure smooth implementations.

There is more support from empirical studies. In a study of a junior secondary school innovation in Nigeria, Nwakoby and Lewin (1991) reported that any effort to secure a more satisfactory evolution of the curriculum innovation must take cognizance of the conceptual and management gaps which must be bridged in order to generate the level of infrastructural capabilities necessary to support effective and successful innovation. Haffenden's (1991) findings corroborate this argument encompassing three dimensions, two of which are particularly relevant. The first emphasises infrastructural considerations to ensure that all the participants understand the rationale behind the organisational structures and levels of accountability and responsibility enshrined in them and effective flow of information between the different groups of staff at and within different levels of organisation. The second is staff consensus to ensure that new ideas and procedures are established in negotiation with those responsible for carrying them out. The third is that leadership authority must be clearly established if planned change is to be maximised. Moreover, the authority invested in meetings, committees and working parties must also be clearly stated.

### *Building up network*

Communication and collaboration are crucially important to cultivate an environment of learning and attempting innovations. A network approach would be a useful means for the expertise of a wide range of individuals within the institution with relevant expertise to be tapped. The network, as Hounsell (1994) argues, holds out better prospects of realising the ideal of a 'learning organisation' which continually



renews itself; it helps dissolve the boundaries between those who formulate policy, those who implement it and those on whom it impacts; and in the longer term it draws everyone into a net of informing, motivating, training and coaching others - an indispensable management skill. Huberman (1992) also emphasises that an important ingredient in teacher development involves setting up a supportive networks of teachers who can learn from each other or carry out their own individual learning. Fullan (1999), drawing on evolutionary theory and also complexity (or chaos) theory, suggests that the most successful groups in terms of evolutionary survival have been co-operative ones. Dean (1991) suggests the necessity of establishing learning organisations where professional development culture is valued and teachers can keep up-to-date, maintain good practice and network with others.

## **Cultural continuity and adaptation**

### *Integrating a training course with the existing system*

As Fullan (1982) suggests, one-off staff development workshops are less effective. Duffy and Roehler (1986) recognise that short-term innovations and contextually isolated methods course will have little impact. Waters and Vilches (2001) found that cross-cultural INSET programmes, likened to a 'cultural island' (Miles, 1964) or 'seminar island' (Rudduck, 1981) may meet the need for teachers to be 'inducted' into the innovation paradigm, but may not provide them with sufficient opportunity to make the ideas personally meaningful in terms of the realities of the context in which they normally work. There is a need for the innovation development strategy to include a school-based teacher learning element, linked closely to the work done at the foundation-building level. Rudduck (1981) proposed that the INSET course provided teachers not only with new teaching ideas but also with guidance to support their subsequent attempts to put them into practice. Teachers should be provided with at least a framework for action and a sufficient understanding of the principles that inform it to enable them to continue the task of building it and critically reviewing it when they are back. Besides, a follow-up system is needed, in other words, a 'bridge' has to be constructed, linking the seminar island to the school island. Huberman

(1992) suggests 'on the job' training as particularly beneficial. He stresses the need to integrate training and practice, and to provide opportunities for development, which are integrated into people's jobs. Dean (1991) proposed follow-up activities as integral to the professional development that relates new learning to practice. Ibrahim (1991) also emphasises the importance of follow-up activities in his study of an in-service training course in Malaysia and claimed that unless there is integration between the in-service course activities and teachers' classroom practice, the course will serve little purpose in terms of curriculum dissemination and implementation. He considers meetings and supervision as effective means in that particular context. Stensaker (1998) argues in his study of two government-initiated reforms in Norway that it is not enough for reforms to have a general image of rationality and progressiveness, but that these two factors must match the specific interpretations of 'rationality' and 'progress' which exist in the adapting organisations, often legitimised by leading academics, and that the reform must be adjusted to existing forms of work and functions.

It needs to be stressed, as Benne and Birnbaum (1970) highlighted, that the attempts to achieve congruence between an innovation and the local environment involve not only adapting and modifying the innovation, but also changing relevant aspects of the environment to achieve harmony. They claim that attempts to change any subsystem in a larger system must be preceded or accompanied by diagnosis of other subsystems that will be affected by the change.

### *Enhancing cultural integration and synergy*

Numerous empirical studies have converged on the importance of cultural integration and synergy as an effective means to achieve mutual adaptation and harmony, and ultimately enhance their benefits to teachers' teaching and students' learning in indigenous environments. To a large extent the success of the project depends on the ability to forge good links with the local personnel, to understand what Holliday (1994: 113) calls their 'real world problems', and to have some insights into the 'surface' and 'deep action' of the institutional culture (Leather, 2001). Trowler

(1998) and Dawson (1994) argue for cultural sensitivity in devising change strategies. Li (1998) suggests 'adapting' rather than 'adopting' as an effective solution to implementing CLT in EFL contexts. Lewis and McCook (2002), in an empirical study of an in-service teacher training course in Vietnam, supported this view with the evidence that teachers did implement new ideas at the same time as incorporating the traditional features valued in their educational systems.

Consonant with this view, Medgyes (1986) suggested the need of mediators, non-native teachers of English to introduce communicative methods in Hungary to play the role of filters, i.e. letting the moderate ideas through, while blocking the more far-fetched. Ellis (1996) recommended looking for common ground between Vietnamese cultural values and CLT. Holliday (1997) having examined six communicative English language classes at universities in India and China, suggested examining classroom culture in terms of the wider culture to show the interrelationship between local, national, international, professional, and academic cultures. Ellis and Holliday reached a similar conclusion that innovation will succeed only if there is cultural continuity between CLT and more traditional forms. Therefore a cross-cultural understating and adaptability (Hutchings et al, 2002), self-awareness and other-awareness (Meier, 2001) are imperatives. Adaptability and cross-cultural sensitivity (Hutchings et al, 2002) need to be fostered to achieve communication competence in a range of aspects: tolerance of ambiguity, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction management, ethnocentrism, flexibility (Gudykunst and Kim, 1984), and stress management skills (Hammer, 1989). In Japan, Sano et al (1984) argue that the CLT needs to be adapted to the local needs.

Kennedy and Edwards (1998) stress cultural congruence in their list of six conditions necessary for change, five of them related to cultural fitness (feasibility, acceptability, relevance, trialability, adaptability, and ownership). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) draw similar conclusions based on more than 1,500 empirical and non-empirical studies, highlighting five parameters for the successes of innovations: relative advantage, observability, trialability, complexity and compatibility. Likewise, Breen et al (1989) suggest that INSET programmes are much more likely

to succeed if course designers are kept in a continuous state of information gathering and subsequent revision in order to ensure that the innovation is better suited to the local environment. Segovia and Galang (2002) suggest broad and holistic thinking to enhance the longer-term sustainability of INSET. Henrichsen (1989) suggests, the innovation process is multi-dimensional, involving multiple interacting element that need to be taken into account: including the innovation itself, the resource system, the user system, and the inter-elemental system. Doyle and Ponder (1977) point to the necessity of a thorough understanding of the naturally existing mechanisms which operate in school environments. Longitudinal efforts should be the focus.

### *Developing intercultural maturity*

Given the fact that communication is rarely culture-free (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999), in the case of cross-cultural innovation initiatives, inter-cultural maturity is of particular importance as a bridge for smooth communication and collaboration between local and expatriate personnel. This view is strongly supported by a number of researchers. Volet and Tan-Quigley (1999) conclude in their study of the interactions between southeast Asian students and administrative staff at a university in Australia that culturally bound cognitions, values and expectations can contribute to misunderstanding in the interpretation of everyday behaviours and in turn to breakdown in cross-cultural communication. They further stress the importance of reciprocal cultural understanding and fostering the development of intercultural communication competence, knowledge of other culture, and ability for social decentring. They propose cultural adaptation as a necessary solution.

Solutions provided by King (2002) ring similar despite his different terms. He suggests that there is one initial step before the attainment of intercultural maturity, i.e. acquisition of intercultural competence. He highlights the importance of intercultural competencies for people to 'be better prepared to understand, learn from and collaborate with others from a variety of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds; demonstrate creative problem solving by integrating differing perspectives; exhibit the skills required for good teamwork; and demonstrate more effective



responsiveness to the needs of all types of consumers'. He points out that intercultural skills consist of knowledge of cultures and cultural practices, complex cognitive skills for decision-making, social skills to function effectively in diverse work groups, and personal attributes that include flexibility and openness to new ideas. Meyer (1991) describes intercultural competence as including the capacity of stabilising one's self-identity in the process of cross-cultural mediation, and of helping other people to stabilise their self-identity.

However, in King's view, intercultural competence which is displayed in a series of interdependent skills is not sufficient. He further stresses the need to foster intercultural maturity which is built upon intercultural competence. Ortiz (2000) sees intercultural maturity as encompassing five elements: understanding culture; learning about other cultures; recognising and deconstructing culture; recognising the legitimacy of other cultures; and developing a multicultural outlook. The possession of intercultural skills, competence and maturity are considered as promoting mutual understanding and collaboration.

In sum, recognition and consideration of the above-mentioned aspects would increase the possibility of success of INSET programmes. A checklist of the points discussed might be a useful guideline (but not a prescriptive one). The longer-term sustainability hinges upon the joint efforts on the part of the diversity of parties involved in an initiative and the interactions between them as well as regards for cultural continuity.

The micro level's responsibilities include

- Establishing collaborative cultures at the team level
- Capitalising on the role of leadership
- Conducting research related to INSET
- Adopting a client-centred, purposive and evolutionary approach to INSET

The meso and macro level's responsibilities lie in

- Providing administrative and professional support

- Empowering the ‘insiders’
- Harmonising individual and organisational needs
- Dealing with resistance from teachers
- Integrating top-down approaches and self-directed bottom-up professional development
- Empowering teachers in their pursuit of their professional development

Interactions between the three levels entail

- Facilitating communication and coordination between various parties
- Building up network

Efforts to maintain cultural continuity encompass

- Integrating a training course with the existing system
- Enhancing cultural integration and synergy
- Fostering intercultural maturity

## **Conclusions**

The review of the literature has covered a number of essential interrelated issues on change encompassing perspectives on change and longer-term sustainability, strategies for change, change process, and ways of enhancing longer-term sustainability of INSET initiatives. It has pointed to a number of salient characteristics of change. First of all, change is an ongoing and complex process and an undertaking fraught with potential difficulty (Hayes, 2000) whose outcomes are uncertain and unpredictable. Its implementation requires appropriate strategies, and in many cases, a mix of both top down and bottom up may be more desirable than utilising one strategy.

It has been highlighted that INSET initiatives are meant to provide professional assistance to teachers, therefore, teachers’ needs are considered as one of the top priorities on the agenda. In other words, INSET is meant to enable teachers to cope with their day-to-day teaching with the provision of continuous instead of one-off

support. The professional development enterprise requires determination, vision, good planning and management (Dove, 1986). For teacher training courses to be sustained, a multiplicity of conditions need be in place for the benefit of teachers' professional development specifically and the educational development in general. It is important to be aware that change is incremental (Paul, 2002), and that pervasive change takes time, therefore it is necessary to be willing to think long term and slow (Trowler et al, 2003).

Given the fact that change is more often than not beyond control, it is important to be aware that change does not necessarily produce hoped-for results despite well-conceived strategies adopted. A variety of factors are influential relating to the change initiative per se, the characteristics of the change agents, the attributes of the change environment and the degree of congruence between the status quo and the envisaged goals. In the case of cross-cultural INSET initiatives, cultural fitness is often a problematic area, and therefore cultural continuity (Holliday, 1997; Brown, 2000) remains an important issue in those change contexts. Solutions to achieving cultural continuity are addressed correspondingly.

In the last section recommendations are proposed to maximise the impact of cross-cultural INSET initiatives and therefore to achieve the goal of enhancing their longer-term sustainability. Various dimensions are addressed both within initiatives themselves and beyond them, i.e. both internal and external parameters are touched upon. Since INSET initiatives are systemic undertakings, which involve a diversity of stakeholders, the prospect of their longer-term sustainability hinges upon the joint effort of three main levels, the micro, the meso and macro levels. The establishment of collaborative cultures, empowering the team, exploiting the role of leadership at the micro level are emphasised. The provision of administrative and professional support at the meso level is recognised as essential in forms of creating training opportunities, harmonising individual and institutional needs and building up network. Conducting research is deemed as necessary for the long-term benefit. Regular monitoring and evaluation are regarded as integral parts of programmes.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

In the previous two chapters a comprehensive and focused survey has been conducted of the major issues in the literature with regard to CPD and cross-cultural INSET initiatives to highlight characteristics of change process in general and to pinpoint factors influencing longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural initiatives.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of how the investigation was planned and conducted. It firstly introduces research design and strategy, including ontological and epistemological assumptions, research design, research strategies and research background. It secondly deals with data collection, comprising introductions to data collection methods and respondents, data collection schedules, interview schedules and questionnaires, pilot study, and the conduct of data collection. Fourthly, reflections on research design and data collection are discussed; fifthly, it deals with the way in which the interview and questionnaire data were analysed, and conventions for interview extracts; and finally, and very briefly, with the presentation of the findings.

#### **Research Design and Strategy**

The importance of research design is rated as equal to that of an architect's designing a building before its construction gets started. Ackoff (1953:5) stresses the importance of research design in his argument that we increase our chances for controlling the research procedure if we anticipate each research problem and decide what to do before we conduct an inquiry. Bryman (2001: 29) also highlights the importance of research design in his statement that research design represents a structure that guides the execution of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data. Research design provides a framework for the collection and



analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process.

As Cohen et al (2001) argue, research is concerned with understanding the world and this is informed by how we view our world(s), what we take understanding to be, and we see as the purposes of understanding. In other words, a series of aspects are considered and give rise to the choice of research strategies including ontological assumptions, epistemological assumptions and methodological considerations. In the view of Hitchcock and Hughes (1989), ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these in turn give rise to methodological considerations, and these, in turn, give rise to issues of instrumentation and data collection. Therefore it is important to clarify the ontological and epistemological assumptions which informed the research design and strategy.

### Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

Ontological issues are concerned with the nature of social entities. They are to do with whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors or as something that people are in the process of fashioning. Therefore ontological assumptions influence research design and strategies in the way that they concern conceptions of social reality, or in other words, the very nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated (Cohen et al, 2001: 5).

There are two contrasting positions which are referred to respectively as objectivism and constructionism (Bryman, 2001), or in Cohen et al's terms, realism and normalism (Cohen et al, 2001). Objectivism implies that social phenomena confront us as external facts that are beyond our reach or influence (Bryman, 2001). It asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. It contends that objects have an independent existence and are not dependent for it on the knower (Cohen et al, 2001). By contrast, constructionism asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being recreated by social actors. It implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced

through social interaction, but that they are in a constant state of revision. Objects of thought are merely words and that there is no independently accessible thing constituting the meaning of a word.

Epistemological assumptions, defined by Burrell and Morgan (1979), concern the very bases of knowledge – its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and how communicated to other human beings. They are to do with what is regarded as appropriate knowledge about the social world. One of the most crucial aspects is the question of whether or not a natural science model of the research process is suitable for the study of the social world. Bryman (2001) identifies two opposing epistemologies. One is a natural science epistemology, positivism, and the other interpretivism/naturalism. Positivism advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond. It is characterised by two connected suppositions which have been identified by Giddens (1976). First, the methodological procedures of natural science may be directly applied to the social sciences. Second, the end-product of investigations by social scientists can be formulated in terms parallel to those of natural science. This means that their analyses must be expressed in laws or law-like generalisations of the same kind that have been established in relation to natural phenomena. Positivism here involves a definite view of social scientists as analysts or interpreters of their subject matter.

In contrast with positivistic epistemology, interpretivism maintains that the subject matter of social sciences is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences. The study of the social world therefore requires a different logic of research procedure, one that reflects the distinctiveness of humans as against the natural order (Bryman, 2001: 13). It respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientists to grasp the subjective meaning of social action.

Constructionist and interpretivistic positions are held for the research. The constructionist view claims that social reality is the product of individual consciousness and that there is no independently accessible thing constituting the

meaning of a world (Cohen et al, 2001). The interpretivistic opinion argues that understanding the world is virtually understanding human behaviour, and the social world can only be understood in its natural state, without the intervention of, or manipulation by, the researcher from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Any investigation of the social world will result in multiple interpretations of, and perspectives on, single events and situations. Therefore 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) through the eyes of participants rather than the researcher are one of the major characteristics of such investigations.

### Research Design: Case Study and Illuminative Evaluation

In correspondence with the above-mentioned epistemological and ontological assumptions, the present research is largely qualitative. Different from quantitative research which puts its main focus on the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables instead of processes, this research places an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). It examines processes and behaviours in their natural settings (Shank, 2002). It entails the use of a variety of methods in an attempt to interpret and understand the world, and in so doing, offers multiple perspectives that incrementally add to our understanding of its operation and its implicit meanings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It is characterised by complexity, uncertainty, context, rich/thick descriptions and multiple analytical methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Shank, 2002).

There are five categories of research design, including quasi-experiments cross-sectional or social survey design, longitudinal design, case study design, and comparative design. Yin (1994) categorises case study into exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. One of the three types, exploratory case study, was considered as fit for the purpose of in-depth field-based investigation for three reasons. Firstly, it can best answer the research questions, which are mainly 'what', 'why' and 'how'

questions. Secondly, the researcher has little control over events. It is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question (Stake, 1995). Thirdly, as Yin notes (1985), it seeks to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. The case study approach allows the investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. It places the researcher in a good position to understand complex social phenomena. It also requires the researcher to personally insert themselves into the actors' world by going on-site and studying phenomena in their natural context over a period of time (Parker, 2004).

The research also serves as an illuminative evaluation (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972). Its focus of attention is on understanding the context to capture a realistic picture and understanding the process as well as the outcomes. It aims to unravel and illuminate problems, issues and significant programme features (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) through generating realistic and thick accounts of what has happened. It intends to strike a balance between purposes of development and accountability. Its primary concern is with description and interpretation rather than measurement and prediction. It intends to examine the consequences of the adoption of teacher training courses by comparing 'what is' with 'what should be' (Weiss, 1972: 6). It attempts to facilitate an innovation (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) by pinpointing crucial elements for its viability from as diverse groups of insiders as possible, of which evaluation should be an integral part. It is intended to be practical and down-to-earth in addressing various aspects of both the processes and outcomes of practice.

As Patton (1980) put it, evaluation research is used as one piece of information that feeds into a slow, evolutionary process of programme development, and that findings of evaluation research are viewed as an additional source that will affect the decision in part. The research, with an evaluation element, seeks to add to the body of knowledge even if the results are not utilised, as a distinct form of evaluation to provide information for decision-making (Baker and Alkin, 1973). It seeks to fulfill a 'killing-two-birds-with-one-stone' purpose, i.e. primarily to shed lights on influential factors for longer-terms sustainability of cross-cultural INSET programmes by looking at perspectives of insiders (programme participants), as a secondary purpose



to meet the need of assessing the outcomes of programmes from the perspectives of funders and authorities concerned.

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires, interviews and documentation were utilised as main instruments to gather information. This strategy of triangulation was intended to 'offset different kinds of bias and measurement error' (Rossi and Freeman, 1993: 437). Consequently, the researcher's position has arisen as an issue in the evaluation research. As Anderson (2000) argues, the role of the researcher/evaluator in understanding the complexity of real programmes requires the researcher to take an objective position. The researcher has to be a neutral observer and an impartial reporter, and regardless of being an outsider or an insider, would need to look at diverse perspectives involved in the programme. Saunders (2000: 20) also suggested that, to arrive at a judgement on value and worth, an insight into the quality of the experience from the point of view of the key stakeholders is required. It is necessary to obtain a complementary (and maybe) contrasting mix of viewpoints. Throughout the research process, a neutral perspective was maintained in the researcher's encounters with various groups of informants and examinations of the information collected.

### Research Strategies: Abductive and Deductive

Research strategies are intended to achieve the best procedure(s) for dealing with a research topic, and particularly, for answering research questions. In other words, research strategies provide the logic or the set of procedures with which the research questions will be answered. Blaikie (2000) identifies four research strategies, namely the inductive, the deductive, the retroductive and the abductive. Each strategy provides different ways of answering research questions by specifying a starting-point, a series of steps and an end-point. A summary of the logic of the four research strategies is presented in Table 4. 1.

**Table 4.1 The logic of four research strategies (Blaikie, 2000: 101)**

	<b>Inductive</b>	<b>Deductive</b>	<b>Retroductive</b>	<b>Abductive</b>
<b>Aim</b>	To establish universal generalisations to be used as pattern explanations	To test theorise to eliminate false ones and corroborate the survivor	To discover underlying mechanisms to explain observed regularities	To describe and understand social life in terms of social actors' motives and accounts
<b>From</b>	To accumulate observations or data	To borrow or construct a theory and express it as an argument	To document and model a regularity	To discover everyday lay concepts, meanings and motives
<b>To</b>	To produce generalisations; To use these 'laws' as patterns to explain further observations	To deduce hypotheses; To test the hypotheses by matching them with data	To construct a hypothetical model of a mechanism; To find the real mechanism by observation and/or experiment	To produce a technical account from lay accounts; To develop a theory and test it iteratively

The deductive and abductive strategies were adopted for this study. The deductive strategy was employed to test theories on CPD and change in real-life context. The abductive strategy was utilised for its advantage of being an iterative process. It involves the researcher in alternating periods of immersion in the relevant social world, and periods of withdrawal for reflection and analysis. It is a hermeneutic process that resists the imposition of 'top down' schemes and prefers to generate concepts in a 'bottom up' manner. It goes one step further than the inductive strategy to explain and test the theory. The combination of the two strategies allows the researcher to undertake the investigation with an open mind.

## Research Background

In this investigation four cross-cultural INSET initiatives were chosen in order to pinpoint factors that contribute to and hinder the prospects for longer-term sustainability of projects of this kind. The four initiatives, having taken place between 1980 and 2004 in the same province in China are represented respectively by Projects A, B, C and D. Project A was the core focus of research and required an in-depth case study to capture an overall picture of substantive issues concerning longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural projects. The other three projects were supplementary to this investigation, and thus the examination of them was much less

detailed.

Project A was sited in a provincial comprehensive university. It was involved in training of teachers from adult education institutions (AEIs) between 1997 and 2000 with another university, where Project C was situated. As the project memorandum and log frame indicate, the project aimed to upgrade the English language capabilities of key institutions involved in economic development activity in the province. This goal was expected to be met by increasing the capacity of these two universities to respond to vocationally related English language needs in adult education. Project A was aimed at addressing the ESP and pedagogical needs of AEI teachers. It was terminated in 2000, one year before the original expected time.

Project B, based in a national teacher training university was involved in two cross-cultural training programmes in the 1980s and the 1990s, the first one (B1) undertaking training of senior high school teachers from underdeveloped regions in central China, and the other one (B2) assuming training of university teachers in the same area. B1 was commissioned by the Ministry of Education (formerly named National Education Commission), while B2, as a product of B1, was a collaborative initiative between the university and the international agency without the involvement of the national government. The two training courses were integrated with existing postgraduate programmes at a later stage of their development, and have developed into a nationally well-known postgraduate programme oriented to teachers at various levels with bachelor's degrees. The postgraduate programme was still being delivered full-time and part-time up to the date of the research.

Project C was based in a national comprehensive university and participated in a cross-cultural training programme in 1997 along with Project A. As a branch of a project intended 'to increase the capacity of the university to respond to the ESP needs of institutions involved in economic development activity in the province', Project C aimed to develop an English for legal purposes (ELP) training programme for teachers and key personnel who worked in the legal profession. It was discontinued in late 1998, not long after its inception.

Project D, situated in a provincial polytechnic university has been taking part in vocational education training oriented to practitioners, including administrative personnel and teachers of secondary and tertiary vocational education since 2001. Up to 2003, three hundred and ninety-one trainees in four groups had received training. A distinctive feature about Project D was that the training of the programme was conducted in English with the assistance of interpreters. The programme was still running up to the date of investigation.

## **Data Collection**

This section concerns a series of issues with regard to data collection. Firstly, it introduces the strategy of employing multiple data collection methods, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, including both individual interviews and focus groups and documentation. Secondly, it presents data collection schedules, which turned out to confirm the evolving characteristic of data collection as a result of ever-changing contingencies. Thirdly, it describes instruments employed for the two phases of data collection, including interview schedules for the two stages and questionnaires for Project A participants (trainers and trainees) at the first stage. Fourthly, an introduction to the pilot study is provided. Finally, the conduct of the two rounds of data collection is delineated.

## **Triangulation of Data Collection Methods and Respondents**

As Burgess (1984) noted, no research method is considered superior to any of the others and therefore no method alone could yield the 'truth' about a situation. He further argues that researchers need to approach substantive and theoretical programmes with a range of methods that are appropriate for their problems. Such a perspective means that researchers cannot rigidly apply their methods but need to be flexible in their approach and utilise a variety of methods for any problem.

Data triangulation and methodological triangulation (Burgess, 1984: 145) are two main features of triangulation of data collection methods. Data triangulation refers to



triangulation in time, space and person. Methodological triangulation includes 'within method' triangulation, that is the same method used on different occasions, and 'between method' triangulation when different methods are used in relation to the same object of study. A mixture of complementary methods included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and documentation to achieve triangulation of sources of information, or in Burgess' terms 'to pursue a particular line of inquiry and to maximise the validity of the data collected' (1984: 156). Likewise, a number of data sources were utilised to reach convergence of data from different sources and to reveal various perspectives on the same issues.

As far as Project A is concerned, all major stakeholders were approached, including trainers, trainees, expatriates, university administrators, AEI administrators and local provincial authorities. Questionnaires were designed for course participants, i.e. trainers and trainees (see Appendices 1.1 and 1.2). The questionnaire for the trainers was in English, and the one for the trainees was translated into Chinese for ease of trainees' understanding. Semi-structured interviews were employed for the five groups of stakeholders on Project A, (see Appendices 1.3-1.10) and as a major instrument to gather data from Projects B, C and D (see Appendix 2). The project team members and administrators were the main focus, but other groups of stakeholders were not ruled out depending on their availability. Group interviews were employed for trainees, whilst individual interviews for other groups. The choice of group interviews for trainees aimed to 'provide an opportunity to work with a group of people's ideas and lead to interesting discussions between participants' (Stroh, 2000: 199), and to 'give them some control over the discussion and over the questions posed' (Burgess, 1984: 118). Individual interviews were chosen for other groups of participants in order to 'explore an individual's opinion in depth' (Stroh, 2000: 199).

Official documents were consulted as a source of background information about the four projects. In particular for Project D, official documents were employed as one of the major sources of information about the views of local educational authorities and expatriates. They were intended to add objectivity, validity and reliability to the

investigation. In Burgess' terms (1984, 146), the aim of using different methods is not only to see different approaches used alongside one another but also to see them integrated within the course of an investigation.

The multiple methods were intended to yield both qualitative and quantitative data. The integration between the two types of data was based on three major reasons defined by Rossman and Wilson (1984, 1991): a) to enable confirmation or corroboration of each other via triangulation; b) to elaborate or develop analysis, to provide richer details; and c) to initiate new lines of thinking through attention to surprise paradoxes, "to turn ideas around," and to provide fresh insights.

### Data Collection Schedules

The principle of flexibility (Douglas, 1976) proved to be applicable to the devising and application of data collection schedules. As Douglas claims, flexibility should be maintained in response to the changing circumstance of research setting. An example of this is that proactive adjustments were made accordingly to achieve optimal results of data collection.

Data collection process experienced an alteration from three phases to two as a result of the unforeseeable low recruitment that had happened to Project A in the year of 2002. The initial schedule for a detailed case study of Project A comprised three stages, i.e. between June and October 2002, in March 2003 and in December 2003. The details are presented in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2 Initial data collection schedule for Project A**

Methods  Stakeholders	Question- naires		One-off one-to-one interviews		One-off group interviews		Official documents	Longitudinal one-to-one interviews		Phases
	N	Date	N	Date	N	Date	Date	N	Date	
Expatriates			4	May - June 2002			June-Sept 2002			<b>Phase 1</b> June – Oct 2002
Local education authorities			1	Aug, 2002			June-Sept 2002			
University administrators			2-3	June-Sept 2002			June-Sept 2002			
Project team (1)	13	June-Sept 2002	6	June-Sept 2002			June-Sept 2002			
Trainees (1): current part-time	240	June-Sept 2002			2-3	June-Sept 2002				
Trainees (2): prospective full-time								½ of the group	Sept 2001	<b>Phase 2</b> Mar 2003
Project team (2)			3	Mar 2003			Mar 2003			
Trainees (2): prospective full-time								The same group	Mar 2002	
Trainees (3): previous full-time	130				4-6	Mar 2003				
AEI administrators			4	Mar 2003			Mar 2003			
Trainees (2): prospective full-time								The same group	Dec 2003	<b>Phase 3</b> Dec. 2003

The reasons for this arrangement were multi-fold. The principal one was to explore the original aims and purposes which had given rise to Project A. The second was to approach the relatively small groups before the large groups, i.e. the expatriates (3), the university administrators (2), the local education authorities (1) and part of the project team (7). The third was to prioritise full-time trainees who were expected to have stronger feelings about their experience on the project due to the longer durations. Therefore the part-time trainees were considered as one of the main foci in the first stage. The purpose was to generate useful information to be incorporated in the revised questionnaires and interviews for the full-time trainees in the second

phase of data collection. The fourth purpose was to ensure a case study of the prospective trainees. For this purpose half of the group were expected to participate.

The first phase was intended to be focused on six groups of interviewees, i.e. the expatriates who had been involved in the project, the local education commission, the university, the major members of the project team, the part-time trainees that year (2002), and prospective full-time trainees who were due to start training in September in the same year. The purpose of approaching prospective trainees was to investigate teacher trainees' experience on the project and their changes of perceptions as a result of their training experience through a focused study of that particular group.

The second focused on the ex-trainees, the prospective trainees who would be in the middle of their training, the AEI administrators and the remaining project team members. The third phase aimed to examine the change of perceptions of the prospective trainees who would be near the end of their training.

However, circumstances changed, resulting in alteration of the plan. The low enrolment of full-time trainees in Project A meant it was impossible to carry out follow-up study of new trainees in March 2003. As a result Phases 2 and 3 would seem impracticable. As an alternative, it was decided to investigate parallel cross-cultural initiatives to draw comparisons with Project A. As a result, to prepare for the second round of data collection to be conducted in June 2003, contacts were planned with the British Council based in Beijing for relevant information about cross-cultural INSET initiatives in China.

However, alteration proved to be necessary again. The epidemic of SARS throughout China during that time made travelling for data gathering impossible in China. This change proved to be a mixed blessing for two reasons. First, it helped save time for the second round of data collection. Data processing and analyses were still being carried out in earnest, as a consequence significant results had not emerged yet. The second was the opportunity to reconsider the practicality of approaching the British



Council officer in Beijing for potential informants in different cross-cultural initiatives in China on account of the constraints in budget and time which would pose as realistic considerations to take into account. Consequently the trip back for data collection was postponed to early 2004. The focus was switched to three cross-cultural projects in the same region, which was seen as much more feasible and promising in fulfilling the same purpose. It sought to examine various groups of stakeholders' views on factors influencing the longer-term sustainability of teacher training programmes against those factors drawn from Project A.

## Interview Schedules and Questionnaires

Before the start of the two stages of data collection, interview schedules and questionnaires were devised. For the first phase, both Chinese and English versions of interview schedules were prepared for both trainers and trainees. The questionnaire for trainees was translated into Chinese, the one for trainers was English. For the second phase, the interview schedule was English.

The design of interview schedules was intended to 'give order to messiness and unpredictability and to provide structure and guidance to the interviewer' (Stroh, 2000: 207). The interview schedules for the two phases differed in terms of their coverage and depth of exploration, as shown in Appendices 1.3-1.10 and Appendix 2. Generally speaking, the questions addressed to Project A sought to draw main factors that had facilitated and constrained the project's sustainability, they were therefore comprehensive and detailed, while the questions asked about Projects B, C and D aimed to identify similarities and differences between them and Project A concerning the issue of longer-term sustainability.

## Interview schedules and questionnaires for Phase 1 data collection

Interview schedules for Phase 1 were produced for six groups of respondents (see Appendices 1.3-1.10). There were varying differences between the questions addressed in the interviews depending on the roles of interviewees on the project.

The overriding issue of longer-term sustainability was intended to be explored through examining a series of questions concerned with its project goals, realised and unrealised impact, its prospect of longer-term sustainability and cross-cultural features from the perspectives of various groups of stakeholders.

#### A. Phase 1 interview schedules for course participants

In investigating trainers' perspectives, the interview addressed seven broad issues (see Appendix 1.6):

- the goals of the project (including changes of the goals),
- their expectations,
- their working experience on the project,
- their views about the one-year course in particular,
- the impact achieved up to the date of the study,
- the longer-term sustainability and
- cross-cultural issues.

It is necessary to point out that trainers' comments on the programme related both to the year-long course in years between 1997 and 2001 and to the part-time short courses delivered in the 2000-01 summer and winter vacations.

The questions asked of each group varied to some extent from group to group. Three aspects were addressed to the four groups of full-time trainees between 1997 and 2000 (see Interview schedule 1.7). 1) Their experience on the course, including their expectations of the programme, their views about the course content and course features, the strengths and weaknesses of the course and their benefits from the course, 2) their experience after the course, i.e. their experience of trying to apply what they had learned to their daily teaching practice and challenges they had encountered, what follow-up support they had expected from the project since they came back to their own institutions, and how strongly they had recommended the programme to their colleagues and friends, and 3) cross-cultural features that they perceived as having been successful and inappropriate in the local context.

The questions for the current group (see Interview Schedule 1.8 ), i.e. the 2001 group (they were called current group because the time of their training coincided with the time of the administration of the questionnaires), were similar to those addressed to the ex-trainees, with an exception of those concerning their views about the challenges they thought they might encounter in their application of what they had learned in their normal teaching contexts, follow-up support they would expect from the project after they came back to their own institutions, and how strongly they would recommend the course to their colleagues and friends, and which aspects they would especially recommend to them.

There were two foci in the examination of prospective trainees' perspective. The first one concerned their expectation of the course, including their previous training experience, their expectations of this programme in terms of its course content, teaching methodologies and materials, or any other expectations (if any), likely challenges they anticipated, and what institutional support they had received, e.g. time off, promotion and transport, etc. The second addressed their expectations of a cross-cultural teacher training course, i.e. how they had expected it to be different from a more conventional training course.

The underlying purposes of those questions were to identify perceptions of various groups of trainees concerning the project impact achieved up to date as well as the project's longer-term sustainability. In other words, the focus was intended to be on the trainees' viewpoints about factors that had led to the realised impact, and those that had hindered the programme; and considerations that needed to be taken into account to enhance the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability. The findings concerning the trainees' views about their experience on the course and after the course would be illuminating as to their perspectives about the impact the project had generated and likely measures that might be taken to enhance the project's longer-term sustainability.

## B. Phase 1 interview schedules for expatriates and administrators

The interview schedule for the expatriates covered five major parts (see Appendix 1.3): the project, the one-year course in particular, impact achieved up to the date of the investigation, longer-term sustainability and cross-cultural collaboration and take-up.

The part concerning the project addressed expatriates' perceptions of original goals and changes in goals; and their experience on the project, i.e. the aspects they had been most satisfied with and much less satisfied with. The part regarding the one-year full-time training course looked at the expectations of the British side about the course, their views about the course content and course features. Another section was concerned with the areas in which the most impact and the least impact had been achieved. The longer-term sustainability part concerned their views about the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability, challenges to overcome and measures to be taken to enhance the impact and ensure longer-term sustainability. The cross-cultural part was to do with their viewpoints about which imported ideas had proven to be appropriate and which ones had turned out to be inappropriate in the local context.

The interview schedule for the university administrators addressed four issues (see Appendix 1.5). The first was concerned with their views about the project goals, changes in goals (if any) and the effect of those changes. The second examined their perceptions of the impact the project had achieved and had failed to achieve up to the date of interview as well as facilitating and constraining factors. The third concerned their opinions about the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability, comprising challenges that might be encountered and measures that might be taken to maximise the prospect of sustainability. The fourth investigated their views about cross-cultural features of the programme, i.e. factors that were considered to have contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in the province and elsewhere, and factors that were perceived to have proved problematic and had deserved more attention.



The interview schedule for AEI administrators also involved four issues (see Appendix 1.10). The first addressed their views about the project goals and the importance of these goals for English teachers' professional development and ELT in their institutions. The second concerned their perceptions of changes (if any) that had been brought about by their teachers, both most welcomed changes and less welcomed changes, after their return to their institutions. The third explored their viewpoints about the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability, including challenges that needed to be tackled and institutional support they would offer to their teachers' participation in the programme. The fourth examined their opinions about cross-cultural features of the programme that were felt to have contributed to the collaboration and features that were considered to have proved inappropriate in the local context and had deserved more attention.

### C. Phase 1 questionnaires

Questionnaires (see Appendices 1.1 and 1.2) were devised for Phase 1 for the trainers and trainees. There were some overlaps as well as differences between the questions for both groups. The trainer questionnaire included three parts, and the trainee one encompassed two sections. Questions applicable to both groups were concerned with background information, expectations and experiences. The questions put to the trainers addressed their expectations, their perceptions of their benefits, their level of satisfaction with working experiences on the project, and their opinions about the features of the training course. The equivalent questions put to the trainees asked them about their expectations and experiences, their benefits and the course features. Questions specific to the trainers were their views on the impact of the project, including their views on the impact achieved thus far, facilitating and hindering factors, and ways forward.

### D. Phase 2 interview schedule

Given a more focused purpose of Phase 2 data collection, an interview schedule (see

Appendix 2) was devised based on the findings that had emerged from Phase 1 (These are fully reviewed in Chapters 5-7).

The interviews were focused on the four salient themes that had arisen from Project A, i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic factors as well as cultural transformation permeating in all dimensions and at the three stages of project implementation (input, process and outcome). The purpose was to compare Project A and similar projects and to draw out general features that might apply to initiatives of this kind as well as features peculiar to individual projects. In other words, the interviews sought to find out whether those issues, from the perspectives of the participants of the cognate projects, were considerations to be taken into account for longer-term sustainability.

### Piloting

Piloting of questionnaires was conducted in late June 2002 before the start of the first phase of data collection 'to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaires' (Oppenheim, 1992; Morrison, 1992; Wilson and McLean, 1994: 47). A copy of the two questionnaires for the trainers and trainees was sent to a contact by email to solicit 10 colleagues to make comments and suggestions for further improvement. The questionnaire for the trainees was examined by seven colleagues of mine, six of whom were working in the Department of College English Teaching and one in the Department of English.

The questionnaire for the trainers was checked by four colleagues of mine. Two reasons were pinpointed for this small number of participants. Firstly, my colleagues felt inhibited to raise criticisms of whatever kind about the questionnaire intended for a doctoral research because none of them held doctorates themselves. Secondly, they were too busy to spare time to do it. Six of them undertook teaching of three large groups of non-English majors ranging from 50 to 70 students in size, and two of them assumed dual commitments in the Faculty and on the project. That having been said, their comments and suggestions proved to be rather constructive. A number of

minor pitfalls had been identified concerned with the format, the content of questions, the wording and questions that had been missed out.

In my subsequent contact with the ex- Project A trainees during the first round of data collection, the pilot study was conducted simultaneously along with the actual administration of the questionnaires. The problems pinpointed were mainly concerned with their personal background information, such as their titles and their English proficiency, which had not been included in the questionnaire. There arose a need to take advantage of the ex-trainees' availability, especially since the chances of getting hold of them again were very slim and there was a general reluctance to review the questionnaire twice.

### Execution of Data Collection

Data collection is characterised by necessary alteration of plans to respond to ever changing circumstances and unforeseen contingencies in the research setting. My data collection confirmed Burgess' argument (1984) that researchers could not rigidly apply their methods but needed to be flexible in their approach and utilise a range of methods for any problem.

#### *Data collection in Phase 1*

As a result of following the pre-devised plan and acting according to changing circumstance, both the quality and quantity of the data gathered at Phase 1 were impressively satisfying. Relevant official documents were collected as well as interviews and questionnaires. The majority of the respondents were cooperative and open. Journals were kept with respect to major happenings on Project A, which might potentially be utilised as a supplementary source of data. Summaries of Phase 1 data collection are presented in Tables 4.3.1, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 below.

**Table 4.3.1 Data collection in Phase 1 (25/06/02-31/10/02)**

N of Stakeholders	N		Methods of interview
	Questionnaires	Interviews	
Expatriates (3)		3	One-to-one
University administrators (2)		2	One-to-one
AEI administrators		2	1 individual and 1 group
Trainers (13)	12	11	One-to-one
Full-time trainees (89)	51	10	Focus groups with ex-trainees
		1	Focus group with prospective trainees
Part-time trainees (257)	225	4	2 focus groups for each course

**Table 4.3.2 Interviews conducted in Phase 1 (25/06/02-31/10/02)**

Stakeholders		N	Methods
Expatriates		3	One-to-one
University administrators		2	One-to-one
AEI administrators		2	One-to-one
Trainers (project team)		11	One-to-one
Full-time trainees	Current trainees (2001-02)	4	Focus groups
	Ex-trainees	6	Focus groups
	Prospective trainees	1	Focus group
Part-time trainees	Guangdong	2	Focus groups
	Hunan	2	Focus groups
Total N: 33			

**Table 4.3.3 Questionnaires administered in Phase 1 (25/06/02-31/10/02)**

Groups	Cohorts		Total N	Administered N
Trainees	Full-time	1997-98	15	7
		1998-99	22	8
		1999-2000	11	9
		2000-2001	23	11
		2001-2002	18	16
	Part-time	Guangdong	131	105
		Hunan	126	70
Trainers			13	12
Total N: 238				

As Table 4.3.2 shows, fifteen group interviews were conducted altogether with trainees, ten of which were with full-time trainees (including ex-trainees and current group/2001 Cohort) and one with prospective trainees, and four with part-time trainees who were mostly secondary school teachers and took part in the training during winter and summer vacations from 2000. The numbers of interviewees ranged from two to seven. The interviews with the part-time trainees involved four groups of seven, who volunteered to participate in the interviews. The interview with a group of three non-teacher prospective trainees was considered irrelevant to this research,



whose focus was to explore teacher trainees' views about the programme.

### *Data collection in Phase 2*

The second phase of data collection (between January 15 and March 25, 2004) was focused on three parallel cross-cultural INSET initiatives (Projects B, C, D) which had been implemented in the same province over the last two decades. Interviews were utilised as a main instrument for data collection with its focus informed by the findings yielded from Project A, and official documents as a secondary source. Seven interviews were conducted in Chinese. Six were one-to-one interviews and one was a group interview. Five of them were recorded, and the other two were not recorded at the request of the interviewees. In the latter case, extensive notes were taken. A summary of the second phase of data collection is displayed in Tables 4.3.4 and 4.3.5.

**Table 4.3.4 Interviews conducted in Phase 2 (15/01/04 – 23/03/04)**

Projects	N	Methods
B	1	Group (4 interviewees)
C	3	One to one
D	3	One to one
Total N: 7		

**Table 4.3.5 Details of interviews conducted in Phase 2 (15/01/04 – 23/03/04)**

Date	N of interviewees	Methods
12/02/04	1 administrator, Project D	Face-to-face, individual
13/02/04	1 trainer, Project C	Face-to-face, individual
18/02/04	2 trainers, Project C	Face-to-face, individual
20/02/04	4 trainers, Project B	Face-to-face, group
03/03/04	2 administrators, Project D	Face-to-face, individual

In order to achieve a rounded picture of these projects, supplementary sources of data were also considered. For Project D, in addition to the project participants, two other perspectives were also looked at, including views of two national educational officials and one expatriate project consultant as expressed in their evaluation reports.

## Reflections on Research Design and Data Collection

By reflecting on research design and data collection, a number of salient points have emerged with regard to these two issues.

### Reflections on Research Design

The case study allowed me to carry out an in-depth investigation into Project A through close examinations of perspectives of diverse groups of stakeholders. The study was illuminating in revealing substantive considerations concerning its longer-term sustainability from the insiders' points of view. An unbiased position was striven for gathering and interpreting information. A conceptual framework was generated from the detailed study, and in turn it served as a basis for the examination of ancillary initiatives. The supplementary investigation of the three cognate projects made an important contribution to generalising salient characteristics pertaining to cross-cultural CPD initiatives in the same educational setting.

Generalisability has been often the centre of criticisms concerning the rigour of case study. However, as Yin (1985) has observed:

*Case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a 'sample', and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation). (Yin, 1985: 21)*

The present research adopts that same standpoint instead of statistical generalisation. It aims at theoretical generalisation, developing specific contextualised theories that explain actual observations made in the field (Dawson, 1997; Scapens, 1990).

### Reflections on Data Collection

The data collection involved responsiveness to ever-changing circumstances, sustained effort and communication skills in contacting potential respondents, skills in administering questionnaires and carrying out interviews. The whole process was demanding both physically and mentally. My reflections on the merits and pitfalls as

well as the ethical dimension that had emerged from the two rounds of data collection particularly merit discussion.

### Merits of data collection

In general, the data collection conducted in the two field trips ran fairly smoothly and was fruitful. Overall, it was quite high-yielding in terms of response rate for the questionnaires and the number of interviewees (see Tables 4.3.1 – 4.3.5). On reflection, the smooth process was attributable, firstly to a detailed plan before embarking upon the strenuous task of data collection; secondly, to my openness with and reassurance of confidentiality to the informants; and thirdly, to flexibility and persistence in coping with various contingencies arising during the fieldwork. Planning proved to be of vital importance in steering the data collection process. Meticulous and elaborate preparations had been made beforehand, including selecting appropriate methods for different groups of informants, designing, revising and translating interview schedules and questionnaires, working out data collection time schedules. All of these tasks were more time-consuming and strenuous than I had anticipated.

Although planning was extremely necessary, it did not necessarily guarantee a smooth implementation of pre-set plans. The experiences pointed to the fact that data collection was by no means a straightforward and neat undertaking, which involved hosts of unforeseen contingencies, but had to be come to terms with independently. It frequently happened that I had to contact my interviewees several times for an interview and for the administration of the questionnaires. At that time I was teaching on two part-time training courses and an IELTS training programme. It increased the difficulties of data gathering.

However, all the efforts proved to be worthwhile. A rapport needed to be maintained between the informants and myself. Persistent but courteous chasing and pushing was a useful resort for very busy and elusive informants.

Triangulation of data collection methods and sources of information has facilitated the credibility of data collected. Pursuing multiple methods appeared to have helped to achieve a convergence and rigour of research findings. The various sources of evidence, qualitative and quantitative, provided a mutually consistent picture of the main features of researched projects, and therefore strengthened the justification of the analysis and findings (Parker, 2004). As Firestone (1987) notes, the quantitative data could persuade the reader through de-emphasising individual judgment and stressing the use of established procedures, leading to more precise and generalisable results, while the qualitative data on the other hand could persuade through rich depiction and strategic comparison across cases. The two kinds of data were thus complementary.

My role as a former project team member on Project A and as a tutor on the two part-time training courses at the time of the first phase of data collection proved to be a plus. Firstly, it caused an easy access to the research site and to various groups of respondents. It helped the dialogue and ongoing renegotiation (Erickson, 1986; Smith, 1991) between the informants and myself to be smooth and clear. It is worth stressing that informed consent was always ensured. Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were respected.

The enthusiasm displayed by participants of the four researched projects was extremely touching. The Project A trainees appeared highly supportive and enthusiastic. Some volunteered to recruit people to be involved in the interviews, some spared time from their vacation to complete the questionnaires and to participate in the interviews, and some travelled to my flat voluntarily in the height of summer temperature. Most of them seemed to treat the questionnaire very seriously. One trainee made a phonecall to me the following day after the interview to add a number of points she thought she had missed out.

The project team members also provided generous assistance despite their teaching commitments during the vacation. They were generally open and relaxed during the interviews mainly due to our relationship as colleagues. To my considerable



gratitude, the AEI administrators involved in Project A were also actively involved in the interviews.

The three project participants' assistance made the second round of data collection smooth and fruitful. Both formal and informal channels were utilised with the help of my colleagues. Extremely busy as they were, the informants participated in the interviews. It was beneficial to my understanding of the context and various issues within the span of research. It saved much time and hassles in the fieldwork. The length of fieldwork was shorter than normally needed for case studies.

### Pitfalls in data collection

Apart from the above-mentioned merits of the data collection, a series of drawbacks arose as well. One of the main potential problems was to do with the researcher effect (Hitchhock and Hughes, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994), i.e. the researcher could create social behaviour in others that would not have occurred ordinarily (Miles and Huberman, 1994). That behaviour, in turn, can lead the researcher into biased observations and inferences, thus "confounding" the "natural" characteristics of the setting with the artificial effects of the researcher-native relationship.

Bias could arise from two sources: 1) the effects of the researcher on the case, and 2) the effects of the case on the researcher (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The latter might have occurred in my data collection. My role as a teacher trainer on the project might have posed some pressure on my informants. Some of them more or less might have felt obliged to fulfil my expectations. Nevertheless, it did not appear to create a substantial difference in their true feelings and articulated opinions. This was confirmed by the high level of consistency between the questionnaires and interviews.

The research expertise required for utilising the multiple methods is challenging for me as a novice researcher. My intention of using a variety of data collection methods and sources of data was to achieve as unbiased a view as possible, but it led to

consequence of posing the challenge of aggregating convergent results from a great amount of data generated from diverse perspectives. As Jick (1983) has acknowledged, it is difficult to decide whether or not results have converged. The claims or conclusions rest on judgment on the part of the researcher. The process of 'piecing together many pieces of a complex puzzle into a coherent whole' (Jick, 1983: 144) was a challenging task.

The skills required for conducting interviews were also taxing. English as a medium in the three interviews with three expatriates who held senior positions in Project A constituted a preoccupation for me due to my worries about mistakes in my speaking and failure to understand them, but tape-recording served as a check on my understanding. Unequal power relationship was also a pressurising factor. I was not very at ease with high-ranking officials in the provincial education authorities, the administrators and the senior project team members since respect for authority and seniority were expressed in the ways I was no longer accustomed to after an extensive stay in a different culture. The data collection was also costly for making arrangements and travelling.

Some minor flaws were identified in the instruments in the course of data collection. Misinterpretation might have arisen in the administration of the Chinese version of questionnaires. The interview schedules were useful guidelines, but they could also turn out on occasions to be restrictive of the flow of conversation from my point of view as a novice interviewer. It was sometimes hard to strike a balance between keeping the subjects under control and letting the interviewees be as open and articulate as they could due to my concern about the time limit and the relevancy of their comments.

## Ethical issues

As Cohen et al (2001: 49) note, ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data. They may arise from the nature of the research project itself; the context for the

research; the procedures to be adopted; methods of data collection; the type of data collected; and what is to be done with the data. Throughout my data collection process, ethical considerations were born in mind. Several principles were adhered to strictly.

Informed consent was the first principle adhered to, into the aim of ensuring that I obtained the consent and co-operation of subjects who were to assist in investigations and of significant others in the institutions or organisations providing the research facilities (Cohen et al, 2001: 50). In the process of data collection, individual informants were given 'freedom' and 'self-determination' to choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions. As much information about the aims, nature and procedures as was appropriate was explained to all participants in the time of contact with them.

The effects of the research on participants were also taken into account to preserve their dignity (Cohen et al, 2001: 56). Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were assured to informants before involving them in the research. Privacy comprises three elements: the sensitivity of the information given, the setting being observed, and dissemination of information (Diener and Crandall, 1978). Feedback reports were promised to some interested respondents. The essence of anonymity was to ensure that participants would not be individually identified. Confidentiality was guaranteed by concealing the connection between the information and the provider, and people referred to in the data.

Bias was guarded against throughout the data collection process and data interpretation with a detached position assumed. An open mind was sought to be maintained.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

Data analysis includes analysis of questionnaires and interviews. Conventions for interview extracts are presented.

## Questionnaire Analysis

SPSS was utilised for questionnaire analysis for Project A. Before the start of the analysis, each question was coded and each response was assigned value in a descending order. Appropriate statistics were selected for different purposes. Perspectives of the full-time and part-time trainees, and those of the trainers about the programme were examined respectively.

## Interview Analysis

A series of procedures were involved for the analysis of the interviews. Transcribing was the first task to be dealt with. As far as the Phase 1 interviews are concerned, twenty interviews were transcribed in full, seventeen of which were with Chinese interviewees and were translated into English, and three were with British interviewees and were transcribed verbatim. The reason why the remaining interviews were not transcribed was that patterns of themes had emerged from the already transcribed ones, which had produced a high level of convergence in each group. The Phase 2 interviews were not fully transcribed in verbatim form. The focus was to extract relevant features.

The second step was reviewing the transcripts within each group. Important parts were underlined and labelled with suggestive names of themes. This process applied to every transcript within each group.

The third process was categorising transcript extracts within groups, i.e. extracts that addressed the same issues and themes were grouped together. The final step was identifying the links between the emerging themes for coherent writing-up.

A very important point that merits commentary is that my investigation has focused on reporting the content of informants' statements rather than the particular forms of language which they used to account for their opinions. This is different from many discourse analyses whose focus is also on the precise language used. But every effort



was made to ensure that the content was reported accurately. Modifications of remarks were made when necessary in the interest of economy of presentation, which will be introduced in the conventions for interview extracts in Chapters 6 and 7.

Categorising was by no means a simple task. It happened at times that some extracts could be relegated under different themes as supporting quotes; for example, some extracts could be counted as evidence of impediments to the project realising intended impact, or as evidence of challenges for the sustainability.

### Conventions for Interview Extracts

It is worth noting that conventions mainly apply to interview extracts from Project A.

- All interviews conducted in Chinese were translated into English in the process of transcription. Circumlocution was resorted to when English equivalents were difficult to identify with an effort to minimise distortion of their intended meanings.
- The interviews conducted in Phase 2 were transcribed in a different way from those conducted in the first phase. Their focus was on the key points related to salient themes concerning longer-term sustainability, therefore while detailed notes were made of the interviews, they were not fully transcribed in verbatim form. Relevant features were extracted from the conversations.
- Extracts are normally indented, but brief quotations are sometimes incorporated within the main body of the text, where they appear within single inverted commas.
- Some extracts have been shortened for the economy of presentation. The intention in every case has been to preserve meaning whilst eliminating unnecessary repetition, irrelevant asides, digressions, and so on.
- Punctuation follows normal conventions, using full stops and commas to help convey meaning and/or to indicate a very slight pause. Omission of remarks in the interest of economy of presentation is indicated by three dots. Texts enclosed in parentheses signify explanations of what is said previously.
- Each extract is logged with a reference identifying where it appeared in the

transcripts. Identifiers are used respectively for different groups of interviewees. Most identifiers for trainees include two parts which respectively represent their statuses and the interviewees, with the exceptions of the interviewee who failed to be identified, which are indicated by numbered codes for their status. FT stands for full-time trainees, and PT for part-time trainees. Numbers are given to each interview, e.g. FT01, PT02, and so on. The numbers after them are indicators of the interviewees. For example, FT01 stands for an extract from the first interview with a full-time trainee and the interviewee was the first one to speak during that interview; while PT01 represents an extract from an interview with a part-time trainee. Some identifiers containing only the first part are for those who failed to be identified in the group. Identifiers for trainers consist of two parts. The first part indicates the status of the interviewee on the project. The second part, with numbers for individual trainers, specifies the line numbers of extracts, e.g. Tr01 200-05 represents an extract from an interview with the first trainer, covering the lines between 200 and 205. These conventions apply to extracts for other groups of interviewees.

- The texts enclosed in indented quotes are explanations of the texts occurring immediately prior to them.
- To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for people mentioned in the interviews. Chinese names were used for Chinese people, and English names for British people.

## **The Presentation of Findings**

The findings of the study are presented in Chapters 5-8 below. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are concerned with analyses of Project A data. Chapter 5 depicts perspectives of course participants, i.e. the trainers and trainees about the programme in the case study revealed from the questionnaires. Chapter 6 again delineates course participants' perspectives about the programmes yielded from the interviews. Chapter 7 presents perspectives of three groups beyond the project team level,

including expatriates, university administrators and AEI administrators. Chapter 8 reports results from the other three cognate initiatives, Projects B, C and D.

Two points deserve stressing regarding the presentation of findings. The first is related to the voice of reporting. A measured and impersonal style of analysis was adopted to make the accounts as objective as possible.

The second point is to do with the varying lengths of transcript extracts in the analysis. The extracts to illustrate the perspectives of the trainers, trainees and expatriates were generally longer than those for the university administrators and AEI administrators. There were three reasons for this obvious variation. Firstly, the trainers, trainees and expatriates were directly involved in the project, therefore questions that applied to them were both more detailed and more in-depth. Secondly, these three groups of stakeholders generally made candid and lengthy comments on the major issues. This was particularly true of the trainers and expatriates. Presenting fairly long extracts ensures the intactness of the content and flow of the thoughts, and preserves the complexities contained within the accounts. Thirdly, deliberate attempts were made to make the descriptions compact in Chapter 7 by using more incorporated quotations, which dealt with the perspectives of the expatriates, the university administrators and AEI administrators.

The next chapter concerns the first part of the data analysis, questionnaire findings about the perspectives of Project A course participants about the programme. It, along with the following three chapters, will provide a full picture of salient issues arising from the four researched projects.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Perspectives of Project A Course Participants about the Programme (1)**

Questionnaires were administered to Project A course participants, including both the trainers and trainees in the first round of data collection between late June and late October in 2002. Although a few non-teacher trainees were also involved in the administration of the questionnaire, they were not taken into account in the data analyses due both to the major objective of exploring teacher trainees' perspectives and to the small number of non-teacher trainees (10). Twelve out of thirteen trainers on the project completed the questionnaires, giving a response rate of 92.3%. Two hundred and twenty-six trainees out of three hundred and fifty-six teacher trainees, who participated in the programme between 1997 and 2001 filled up the questionnaires, giving a response rate of 63.5%.

#### **Trainers' and Trainees' Expectations of the Programme**

In examining the perspectives of Project A course participants about the programme, a number of dimensions were addressed to both trainers and trainees, comprising their backgrounds, their expectations and experiences of the programme which involved their expectations, benefits and their views about the features of the programmes in five areas concerned with course design, teaching methodology, course materials, course evaluations and assessment. Separate questions were also asked of the trainers in the light of their work experience on the project and the impact of the project achieved to date and potential measures that might be taken to enhance the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability. In what follows, findings are presented on 1) both trainers' and trainees' expectations; 2) benefits of the programme for them; 3) trainers' working experiences on the programme; 4) perspectives of both trainers and trainees about the programme; and 5) trainers'



views about the project impact achieved so far and the prospect of its longer-term sustainability.

### Trainers' Expectations

In investigating the trainers' expectations of the initiative, one aspect explored comprised those factors which were perceived to have been influential in their decision to become involved. Five factors were identified in the questionnaire: to improve English, to improve teaching, to be able to use the up-to-date project resources, to get a chance to study abroad and feeling obliged to work on the project as one of the their commitments. It was found, as is indicated in Table 5.1.1 that all five factors were endorsed to varying degrees by the trainers. The highest levels of agreement were with two factors, improvement of English and improvement of teaching: ten out of twelve trainers (83.0%) strongly agreed with these two items. However, there was also a quite high endorsement of the other three factors, with nearly half (41.7%) indicating strong agreement with 'to be able to use the project resources', and at least half of them agreeing or strongly agreeing with the items concerned with studying abroad and feeling an obligation to work on the project.

**Table 5.1.1 Trainers' expectations of working on the programme (N = 12)**

<i>Expectations</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>		<i>Agree</i>	
	N	%	N	%
Improving teaching	10	83.3	2	16.7
Improving English	10	83.3	2	16.7
Using up-to-date resources	5	41.7	6	50.0
Going abroad	3	25.0	5	41.7
Feeling obliged to get involved	2	16.7	4	33.3

A second aspect examined was that of how far their expectations were felt to have been fulfilled. As Table 5.1.2 shows, overall satisfaction was high: five were 'very satisfied', six were 'fairly satisfied', while only one trainer was 'not satisfied at all'.

**Table 5.1.2 Extent of trainers' satisfaction with working on the programme  
(N = 12)**

<i>Extent of satisfaction</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Very satisfied	5	41.7
Fairly satisfied	6	50.0
Not satisfied at all	1	8.3

### Trainees' Expectations

Questions about trainees' expectations comprised three parts: first, what made them decide to take part in the course; second, which course topics most interested them; and third, did the course meet their general expectations.

The first part concerned ten factors which affected their making decision to take part in the training. The ten factors were: the location of the course, support from own institutions, the prestige of the course as a Sino-British joint venture, its connection with a degree course, desire to improve English, aspiration to improve teaching, its potential help with career prospects, the qualified project team, the commitment and enthusiasm of the team, the quality and range of the resource materials, and expectation of improving expertise in ESP in four areas. A five point scale was used to show how they felt about the first nine items (from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'), and multiple-choice questions were asked to explore their expectations in four areas of ESP, tourism, international trade, science and technology, and academic reading and writing.

The second part looked at what topics they were most interested in. Seven options were provided: speaking in English, listening in English, reading in English, writing in English, ESP training, English language teaching (ELT) methodology training and research training. They were invited to tick the item(s) that applied to them.

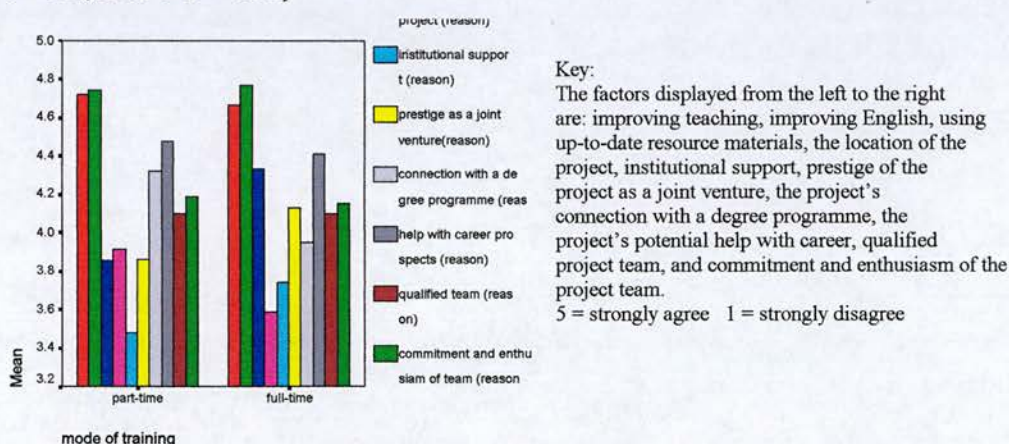
The third part was to do with their general level of satisfaction with the course, i.e. to what extent their expectations had been met. They were also asked to tick the item(s) that applied to them to represent their opinions.

## Factors that made the trainees decide to come on the course

As Figure 5.1.3 shows, there was a consistently high endorsement of the ten aspects: the scores on the ten items were all high for both groups of trainees, being well above midpoint. The numbers of items that scored above four for the part-timers and full-timers were respectively six and seven. The very influential factors for both groups in their decision to come on the course were: improvement of teaching, improvement of English, its potential help with career, qualified team, commitment and enthusiasm of the team.

In addition to the commonalities, some differences (though not substantial) emerged in degrees of importance of some factors. 'The connection of the project with a degree programme' was considered by the part-timers as more important than by the full-timers. 'To use up-to-date resource materials' was perceived to be more influential by the full-timers than by the part-timers. 'The prestige of the project as a joint venture' was seen as a more important consideration by the full-timers than the part-timers. For the part-timers, institutional support was the last factor; while for the full-timers, the location of the project was the last.

**Figure 5.1.3 Full-time and part-time trainees' expectations of the programme**  
(N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)



## Trainees' expectations of the ESP component of the programme

As displayed in Table 5.1.4, the trainees' major interests in ESP were in academic



reading and writing and international trade. More than half of both groups showed their endorsement in academic reading and writing (part-timers: 61.6%; full-timers: 56.6%) and international trade (part-timers: 56.4%; full-timers: 52.8%). Neither groups had very high endorsement of tourism (part-timers: 37.2%; full-timers: 22.6%) or of science and technology (part-timers: 14.0%; full-timers: 15.1%).

**Table 5.1.4 Full-time and part-time trainees' expectations of the ESP component of the programme**

<i>Areas of ESP</i>	<i>PT (N = 172)</i>		<i>FT (N = 53)</i>	
	N	%	N	%
Tourism	64	37.2	12	22.6
International trade	97	56.4	28	52.8
Science and technology	24	14.0	8	15.1
Academic reading and writing	106	61.6	30	56.6

### Most interesting course topics to the trainees

As Table 5.1.5 shows, the majority of the teacher trainees were interested in four language skills and ELT methodology training. However, their endorsement of the ESP component differed. About half of full-time participants were interested in ESP training, while less than one-third of the part-time participants displayed an interest in it. There is also some divergence of opinions on research training. About one-third of full-time trainees were interested in research training, while only one out of ten part-time participants were keen on it.

**Table 5.1.5 Interesting topics to full-time and part-time trainees**

<i>Interesting topics</i>	<i>PT (N = 172)</i>		<i>FT (N = 53)</i>	
	N	%	N	%
Speaking	147	85.5	38	71.7
Listening	131	76.2	35	66.0
Reading	95	55.2	36	67.9
Writing	104	60.5	33	62.3
ESP training	46	26.7	27	50.9
ELT methods	117	68.0	41	77.4
Research training	16	9.3	18	34.0



## How far their general expectations were met

As Table 5.1.6 shows, the trainees' overall opinions about the extent to which their expectations had been fulfilled were broadly positive. About one-quarter of part-time trainees felt the course had fulfilled or exceeded their expectations, and about a little under half of full-time trainees had the same opinion. More than 70% part-time trainees thought the course had partly met their expectations, and more than half of full-time trainees expressed the same opinion. Very few part-time trainees felt the course had not met their expectations at all, and none of the full-time trainees shared this perception.

**Table 5.1.6 Extent to which full-time and part-time trainees' expectations were met**

<i>Extent to which their expectations were met</i>	<i>PT (N = 172)</i>		<i>FT (N = 53)</i>	
	N	%	N	%
Didn't meet my expectations at all	3	1.75	0	0
Partly met my expectations	121	70.3	28	52.8
Fulfilled my expectations	34	19.8	19	35.8
Exceeded my expectations	8	4.7	5	9.4

## Course participants' benefits from their experience on the course

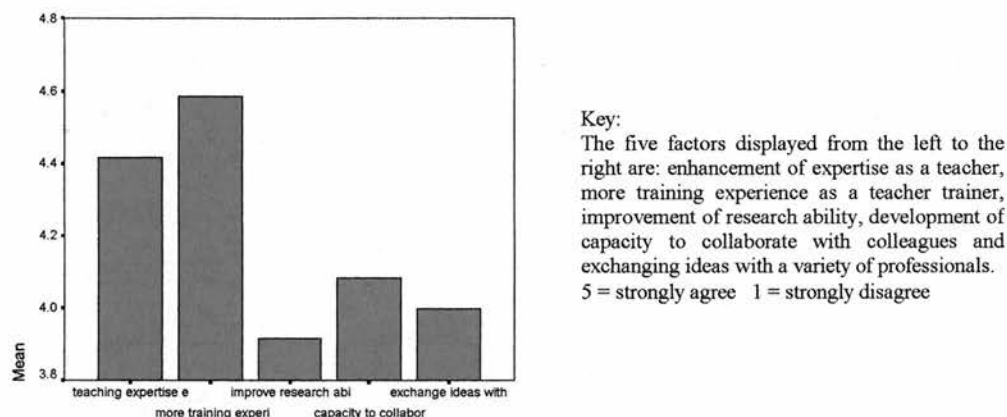
In exploring the perspectives of both trainers and trainees about the areas of their benefits from their experiences on the programme, different items were provided for them to respond to respectively. For the trainers, five items were given: enhancement of expertise as a teacher, more training experience as a teacher trainer, improvement of research ability, development of capacity to collaborate with colleagues and exchanging ideas with a variety of professionals. A five-point scale was employed, representing opinions from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

Questions concerning the trainees' opinions about the benefits of the course for them comprised four. The first three questions were in the form of five-point scales, representing opinions from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', concerned with their improvement of English proficiency, improvement of teaching, help with their

career prospects. The last one was in the form of multiple choices about their benefits from the ESP component, i.e. they were asked to tick the option(s) that applied to them.

## Trainers' views about their benefits from working on the project

**Figure 5.2.1 Trainers' views about their benefits from the project (N = 12)**

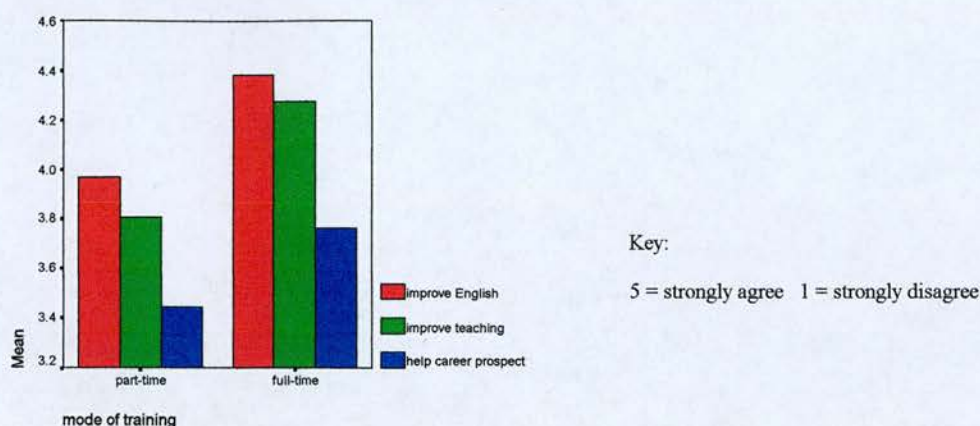


It was found in Figure 5.2.1 that, overall, the trainers were positive about their benefits in the five aspects from the five mean scores being above 3.8. The two items that stood out were 'their attainment of more experience as a teacher trainer' and 'enhancement of expertise as a teacher'. 'Improvement of research ability' was relatively less strongly felt than the other four aspects.

## Trainees' views about the benefits of the course for them

As Figure 5.2.2 shows, both part-time trainees and full-time trainees were positive about their benefits in three aspects: improvement of English, improvement of teaching and the project's help with their career prospects. It also shows that the full-time trainees felt stronger about these benefits than the part-time trainees.

**Figure 5.2.2 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about the benefits of the course (N of FT trainees = 53; N of PT trainees = 172)**



As summarised in Table 5.2.1, a minority of both group of trainees was very satisfied with their benefits in ESP from the programme. Less than half of both groups felt they had benefited in academic reading and writing. About one-third of them acknowledged that they had benefited from international trade. Few of them were positive about tourism; and very few about science and technology.

**Table 5.2 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about their areas of benefits from the programme**

Areas of benefits	Groups			
	PT (N = 172)		FT (N = 53)	
	N	%	N	%
Tourism	10	5.8	14	26.4
International trade	53	30.8	20	37.7
Science & technology	4	2.3	5	9.4
Academic reading & writing	81	47.1	24	45.3

### Trainers' Working Experiences on the Project

The third part of the section on the trainers' expectations and experiences on the programme concerned their working experiences on the project. Eleven factors were identified: the workload, the level of commitment required, the impact of the project so far, financial rewards, career prospects, opportunities to extend their expertise, cohesion of the team, equipment and facilities, teaching mixed levels of students

from a diversity of professional backgrounds, support from the authorities, and the course content and coverage. A five-point scale was used to represent varying degrees of satisfaction with these features, ranging from very satisfying to very unsatisfying.

It was found, as is indicated in Table 5.3, that there was a high endorsement of eight factors and a relatively low endorsement of the other three factors. The eight factors endorsed by the majority of the trainers were: level of commitment required, the workload, course content and coverage, opportunities to extend their expertise, cohesion of team, the project impact achieved so far, equipment and facilities and career prospects. It is noteworthy that workload was considered by nearly half of the trainers (5) as unsatisfying.

The three items that were not highly endorsed included financial rewards, teaching mixed levels of students from a diversity of professional backgrounds and support from the authorities. It was found that 1) none of the trainers saw the three aspects very satisfying, and 2) the ratios between the satisfying (including very satisfying) and unsatisfying (including very unsatisfying) were about one to one.

**Table 5.3 Trainers' working experiences on the project (N = 12)**

<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Very satisfying (N)</i>	<i>Satisfying (N)</i>	<i>Very unsatisfying (N)</i>	<i>Unsatisfying (N)</i>
The workload	0	7	2	3
Level of commitment required	1	10	1	0
Project impact so far	0	7	0	3
Financial rewards	0	5	3	2
Career prospects	1	7	0	1
Opportunities to extend expertise	2	7	0	2
Cohesion of the team	0	9	0	2
Equipment and facilities	1	6	0	3
Teaching mixed levels of students	0	5	2	3
Support from the authorities	0	5	1	5
Course content and coverage	0	11	0	0



## **Course Participants' Views about the Programme**

Questions were asked of all the course participants about their opinions about the features of the programme in terms of six aspects: the balance of the course components, course design, teaching methodology, course materials, course evaluations and assessment. Questions concerning their views about the balance of the course components invited them to choose between three options: 'too much', 'too little' and 'just right'. The remaining questions asked them to rate the relative distinctiveness and effectiveness of the features in course design, teaching methodology, course materials, course evaluations and assessment. These questions sought to explore the characteristics of the programme from the perspectives of the trainers, the full-time and part-time trainees, including strengths and weaknesses, which could be categorised as either contributing factors to the already realised positive impacts to date, or constraining factors for the unrealised goals and potential hindrances to the longer-term sustainability of the programme.

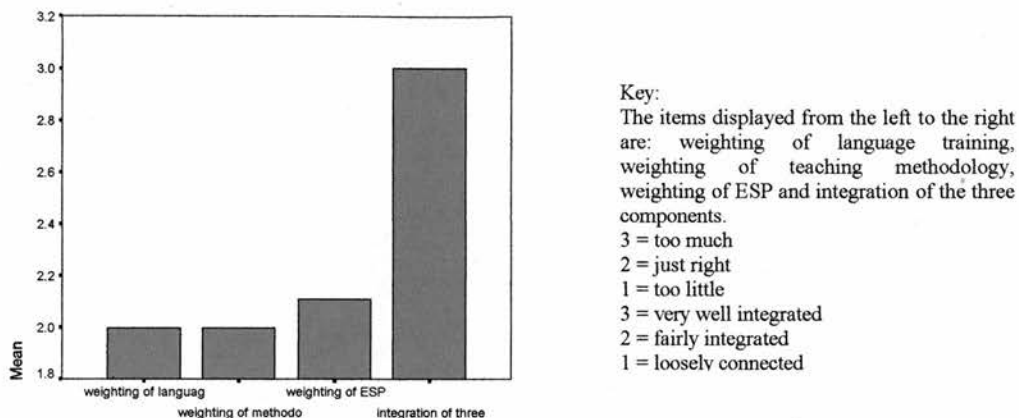
The programme delivered two modes of training: year-long full-time course and short-time training course during vacations. It is therefore well worth comparing the two modes of training from the perspectives of the two groups.

### **The Balance of Course Components**

#### **Trainers' perspectives**

Figure 5.4.1 shows a very positive opinion about the weighting of the three components: language training, teaching methodology and ESP and the integration of the three components. There emerged a consensus that language training and teaching methodology were 'just right' and that the three components were 'very well integrated'.

**Figure 5.4.1 Trainers' opinions about the balance of course components (N = 12)**

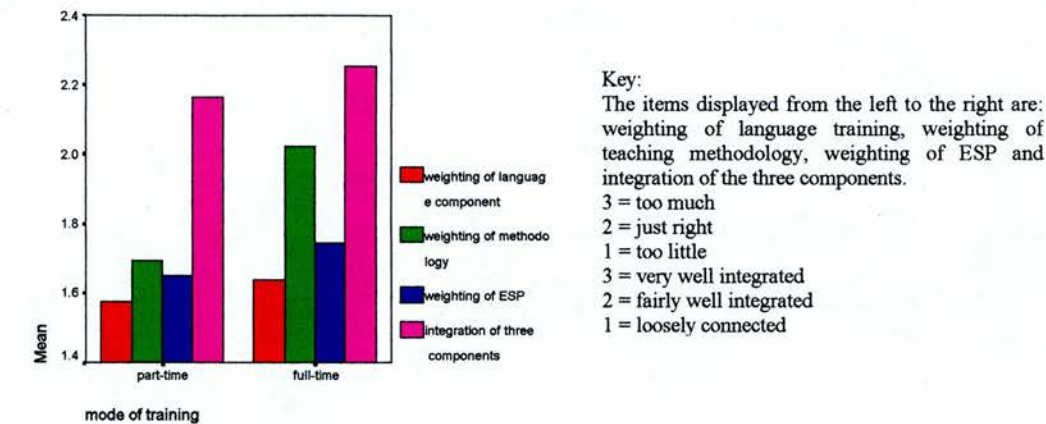


**Trainees' perspectives**

As Figure 5.4.2 shows, as far as the part-time trainees were concerned, the mean scores on the weighting of language training, teaching methodology and ESP were lower than the midpoint. Nevertheless, the three components were considered to be 'fairly well integrated'. From the perspectives of the full-time trainees, the mean scores on language training and ESP fell lower than 'just right'. However, the three components were thought of as being 'fairly well integrated'.

The main difference between the two groups' distributions was in the weighting of teaching methodology. The part-time trainees' rating of it was below the midpoint, while the full-time trainees' was 'just right'.

**Figure 5.4.2 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about the balance of course components (N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)**



## Distinctiveness and Effectiveness of the Programme

### Trainers' perspectives

**Table 5.4.1 Trainers' opinions about features of the programme (N = 12)**

<i>Features</i>		<i>Distinctiveness</i>			<i>Effectiveness</i>		
		High (N)	Moderate (N)	Low (N)	High (N)	Moderate (N)	Low (N)
Course design	Team-made syllabi	7	4	0	4	7	0
	Learner-centredness	7	4	0	5	6	0
	Teaching methodology as one focus	8	3	0	7	4	0
	ESP as one focus	7	3	1	4	6	1
	Language skills as one focus	5	6	0	6	5	0
	English as a main medium of instruction	9	1	0	8	3	0
Teaching methodology	A great deal of pair/group work	9	1	0	9	2	0
	Plenty of opportunities for discussions	8	2	0	8	3	0
	High level of student-teacher interactions	7	2	1	8	3	0
	Relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere	7	3	0	7	4	0
	Emphasis on developing integrated skills	8	2	0	7	4	0
	Emphasis on designing meaningful tasks	7	3	0	6	5	0
	Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses	7	2	1	4	5	2
	Up-to-date	7	3	0	6	4	0
Course materials	Based on British life and culture	7	3	0	4	6	0
	Use of graphs, pictures and other visual aids	7	3	0	6	4	0
	Use of blend of local and imported textbooks	4	4	2	4	7	0
	Much use of handouts	9	1	0	6	4	1
	Integration of skills	7	3	0	8	3	0
	Focused on activities and tasks	7	3	0	8	3	0
	Little inclusion of grammar knowledge	7	2	0	4	6	0
	Regular course evaluations	4	5	0	3	6	1
Course evaluations	Involvement of trainees in course evaluations	3	6	0	3	7	0
	Provision of feedback from the team	2	7	0	3	7	0
Assessment	High priority given to testing problem-solving ability	7	3	0	7	4	0
	Low priority given to testing memorisation	8	2	0	7	4	0



### *Course design*

As Table 5.4.1 shows, there was a high endorsement of the distinctiveness of the five features of the course design, and particularly of four aspects: team-made syllabi, learner-centredness of course design, teaching methodology as a focus, ESP as a focus. More than half of the trainers thought the distinctiveness was high and very few saw it as low. Language skills as a focus enjoyed less endorsement of the five features, but none of the trainers considered it as indistinctive.

There was also a high endorsement of these features as highly effective. Teaching methodology as one focus and language skills training were regarded by half of the trainers as highly effective. Team-made syllabi, learner-centredness of course design and language skills training were considered by half of the trainers to be moderately effective. Only one feature (ESP as a focus) was rated in the low effectiveness, and by only one of the trainers.

### *Teaching methodology*

The majority of the trainers perceived all eight features of the teaching methodology as highly distinctive. The majority of them saw seven features as highly effective apart from 'provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses'. Less than half of them thought of provision of fieldwork as highly or moderately effective; however, few of them considered it as ineffective.

### *Course materials*

There was a general recognition of the features of course materials as highly distinctive and highly effective. Seven out of eight features were regarded as highly distinctive; the exception was 'use of blend of local and imported textbooks'. The majority of the trainers considered five features as highly effective: up-to-dateness, use of visual aids, use of handouts, integration of skills, activity focus. Less than half of the trainers recognised 'based on British life and culture', 'use of blend of local

and imported textbooks' and 'little inclusion of grammar knowledge' as highly effective.

### *Course evaluations*

In general, the majority of trainers saw the specified features of the course evaluations as moderately distinctive and moderately effective.

### *Assessment*

There was a high endorsement of the two features concerning assessment. The majority of the trainers considered 'high priority given to testing problem-solving ability' and 'the low priority given to testing memorisation' as highly distinctive and highly effective.

### *Trainees' perspectives*

#### *Course design*

As Table 5.4.2 shows, there emerged a number of interesting findings concerning the trainees' perspectives on distinctiveness and effectiveness. First, ratings on distinctiveness were higher than those on effectiveness. Second, generally speaking, the full-time trainees were more likely than the part-time trainees to give higher levels of ratings. Third, generally speaking, ESP received the lowest ratings on both distinctiveness and effectiveness from both groups of trainees.

**Table 5.4.2 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course design**  
(N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)

<i>Features</i>		<i>Distinctiveness</i>						<i>Effectiveness</i>					
		High		Moderate		Low		High		Moderate		Low	
		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	
		PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
Course design	Team-made syllabi	25.0	41.5	57.0	52.8	4.7	0	16.3	24.5	57.6	60.4	4.1	5.7
	Learner-centredness	21.5	49.1	58.7	43.4	4.1	1.9	14.5	43.4	57.6	43.4	3.5	1.9
	Teaching methodology as one focus	27.3	62.3	51.7	30.2	5.2	3.8	17.4	45.3	54.1	39.6	4.1	5.7
	ESP as one focus	9.3	22.6	57.6	56.6	16.3	15.1	4.7	13.2	52.9	50.9	18.0	24.5
	Language skills as one focus	27.9	26.4	52.9	62.3	6.4	5.7	17.4	24.5	54.7	58.5	5.8	5.7

### *Teaching methodology*

Three observations emerged from Table 5.4.3. First, there was a high endorsement shared by both groups of 'English as a main medium of instruction' as a highly distinctive feature. Second, the full-time trainees gave consistently higher ratings to all eight features of the teaching methodology as highly distinctive and highly effective. Third, 'the provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses' was given low ratings by both groups in its distinctiveness and effectiveness.

**Table 5.4.3 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about teaching methodology (N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)**

<i>Features</i>		<i>Distinctiveness</i>						<i>Effectiveness</i>					
		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)	
		PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
Teaching methodology	English as a main medium of instruction	64.0	79.2	25.6	17.0	2.3	0	44.2	66.0	39.5	28.3	3.5	0
	A great deal of pair/group work	25.6	58.5	52.3	35.8	9.9	3.8	18.6	39.6	57.6	39.6	10.5	13.2
	Plenty of opportunities for discussions	30.2	60.4	51.2	32.1	8.7	3.8	19.2	45.3	57.6	32.1	9.3	13.2
	High level of student-teacher interactions	32.0	43.4	48.8	47.2	9.3	7.5	25.0	35.8	52.9	43.4	8.1	13.2
	Relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere	39.5	58.5	43.6	32.1	4.1	5.7	30.8	41.5	52.3	43.4	2.3	5.7
	Emphasis on developing integrated skills	23.3	35.8	52.9	54.7	11.6	7.5	16.9	26.4	58.1	56.6	8.7	7.5
	Emphasis on designing meaningful tasks	24.4	37.7	51.2	47.2	10.5	11.3	16.3	32.1	59.9	35.8	7.6	22.6
	Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses	7.6	22.6	22.1	26.4	54.1	39.6	4.7	15.1	31.4	30.2	43.0	37.7

### *Course materials*

Two points stand out in Table 5.4.4. First, full-time trainees were more likely than part-time trainees to rate the eight features of the course materials as highly distinctive and highly effective. Second, more than half of both groups considered 'integration of skills' as moderately distinctive and moderately effective.



**Table 5.4.4 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course materials****(N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)**

		<i>Distinctiveness</i>						<i>Effectiveness</i>					
		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)	
		PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
Course materials	Up-to-date	27.3	69.9	54.1	24.5	5.8	0	19.2	52.8	54.7	34.0	8.1	1.9
	Based on British life and culture	35.5	47.2	44.8	37.7	7.0	9.4	26.7	41.5	49.4	34.0	4.7	13.2
	Use of graphs, pictures and other visual aids	17.4	43.4	52.9	47.2	13.4	7.5	12.2	32.1	55.8	49.1	11.0	9.4
	Use of blend of local and imported textbooks	25.0	34.0	47.7	58.5	11.6	5.7	15.7	24.5	55.8	62.3	8.7	5.7
	Much use of handouts	39.0	56.6	35.5	34.0	9.3	1.9	23.8	28.3	44.2	50.9	10.5	7.5
	Integration of skills	16.9	32.1	60.5	64.2	6.4	0	10.5	26.4	61.0	60.4	6.4	1.9
	Focused on activities and tasks	27.9	58.5	51.2	30.2	5.8	5.7	18.6	41.5	55.2	37.7	5.8	9.4
	Little inclusion of grammar knowledge	18.0	43.4	48.8	37.7	16.3	15.1	10.5	34.0	54.7	39.6	14.0	17.0

### *Course evaluations*

Once again, as is presented in Table 5.4.5, full-time trainees were more likely than part-time trainees to give high ratings for distinctiveness and effectiveness on these three aspects of course evaluations. But equally, full-time trainees were more likely than part-time trainees to give low distinctiveness and effectiveness to these features.

**Table 5.4.5 Full-time and part-time trainees' opinions about course evaluations****(N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)**

<i>Features</i>		<i>Distinctiveness</i>						<i>Effectiveness</i>					
		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)	
		PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
Course evaluations	Regular course evaluations	22.1	41.5	50.6	41.5	8.7	11.3	14.5	32.1	55.2	43.4	7.6	13.2
	Involvement of trainees in course evaluations	16.3	30.2	53.5	41.5	11.0	18.9	14.0	30.2	51.2	35.8	11.0	20.8
	Provision of feedback from the team	12.8	35.8	55.8	34.0	12.2	20.8	11.6	28.3	54.1	35.8	11.0	22.6

## Assessment

Interestingly, the findings displayed in Table 5.4.6 were similar to those concerning the course evaluations. Firstly, there was a high endorsement by the part-time trainees of the two features of assessment as ‘moderately distinctive’ and ‘moderately effective’. Secondly, the numbers of full-time trainees who thought of the features as ‘highly distinctive’ and ‘highly effective’ were consistently larger than those of part-time trainees. Thirdly, the percentages of the full-time trainees who considered the two features to be indistinctive and ineffective were larger than those of the part-time trainees who held the same opinions.

**Table 5.4.6 Full-time and part-time trainees’ opinions about assessment**  
(N of FT = 53; N of PT = 172)

<i>Features</i>			<i>Distinctiveness</i>						<i>Effectiveness</i>					
			High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)		High (%)		Moderate (%)		Low (%)	
			PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT
Assessment	High priority given to testing problem-solving ability		29.1	54.7	52.3	34.0	2.3	5.7	25.6	35.8	52.3	47.2	1.2	7.5
	Low priority given to testing memorisation		18.0	41.5	59.9	43.4	4.1	5.7	16.3	30.2	58.1	47.2	5.2	9.4

## Summaries of Course Participants’ Views about Programme Features

- In general, the trainers were highly positive about the balance of the three course components: language training, teaching methodology and ESP. There emerged a high endorsement of the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the course design and assessment of the programme. All features of the teaching methodology were perceived as highly distinctive; ‘provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses’ was the only feature that was not considered as effective. In terms of course materials, ‘use of blend of local and imported textbooks’ was the only exception that was not seen as highly distinctive; three features i.e. ‘based on British life and culture’, ‘use of blend of local and imported textbooks’ and ‘little inclusion of grammar knowledge’ did not enjoy a high

endorsement as highly effective. Course evaluations were felt to be moderately distinctive and moderately effective.

- The full-time trainees gave consistently higher ratings to those features concerned with the five aspects representing their high distinctiveness and effectiveness.
- More than half of the part-time trainees held moderate opinions about those features with the exceptions of 'English as a main medium of instruction', 'provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses', 'much use of blend of local and imported textbooks', and 'much use of handouts',
- 'English as a main medium of instruction' enjoyed a high endorsement by more than half of both groups of trainees as a highly distinctive feature. However, more than half of the full-time trainees felt it highly effective, whilst less than half of the part-time trainees had the same opinion.
- There emerged disparities about the distinctiveness of the programme features in the five aspects. The proportions of the part-time trainees who considered course design, teaching methodology and course materials low in distinctiveness were consistently larger than those of the full-time trainees with the exception of 'relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere', 'emphasis on designing meaningful tasks', and '(materials) based on British life and culture'. The proportions of the full-time trainees who saw course evaluations and assessment to be low in distinctiveness were consistently larger than those of the part-time trainees.
- There also emerged divergent opinions about the effectiveness of the programme features in the five aspects. The percentages of full-time trainees who rated four areas low in effectiveness (i.e. course design, teaching methodology, course evaluations and assessment) were consistently higher than those of part-time trainees who held the same view with the exception of 'learner-centredness of course design', 'language skills as one focus', 'English as a main medium of instruction', 'emphasis on developing integrated skills', 'provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses'. The effectiveness of course materials was the only area where there was a higher proportion of part-time trainees who felt them low in effectiveness. In other

words, there was a larger number of full-time trainees who considered course design, teaching methodology, course evaluations and assessment as ineffective; while there was a larger number of part-time trainees who found course materials ineffective.

An independent-samples T-test was conducted to confirm that the consistent differences between the part-time and full-time trainees' opinions about the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the programme features were significant. The mean scores of the full-time trainees were found to be consistently higher on all these features than those of the part-time trainees. The significance levels for twenty-four items out of the fifty were below .05. The items where the differences were significant are presented in Table 5.4.7. It can be hypothesised that the divergence of opinions of the two groups on those features was attributable partly to the evolving characteristics of the programme in the two different delivering modes, and partly to their backgrounds and expectations. Which dimension overrides the other needs further confirmation through the support of evidence from the interview data.

**Table 5.4.7 Features where the differences between full-time trainees and part-time trainees were significant (all < 0.05)**

<i>Item</i>	
Distinctiveness	Effectiveness
Team-made syllabi	Learner-centredness in course design
Learner-centredness in course design	Teaching methodology as one focus
Teaching methodology as one focus	English as a main medium of instruction
ESP as one focus	Opportunities for discussions
English as a main medium of instruction	Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses
Pair/group work	Up-to-date materials
Opportunities for discussions	Integration of skills
Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses	Focus on activities and tasks
Up-to-date materials	Little inclusion of grammar
Use of graphs and visual aids	
Use of handouts	
Integration of skills	
Focus on activities and tasks	
Little inclusion of grammar	
Priority given to testing memorisation	



## Trainers' Views about Impact of the Project

The impact of the project was explored in the questionnaire by investigating the trainers' perspectives. Five questions were addressed: 1) in what ways had the project made an impact; 2) what factors did they think had helped the project make an impact; 3) in what areas should the project make a greater impact than hitherto; 4) what local factors needed to be taken into account for the project's longer-term sustainability; and 5) what steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability. Specific questions were subsumed in each question for the project team to respond to. A five-point scale was employed to represent five different attitudes towards these aspects, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

### In what ways has the project made an impact?

As Table 5.5.1 shows, the four provided options were all endorsed to varying degrees. There were two areas of impact on which all the trainers either agreed or strongly agreed: its contribution to teachers' professional development, and provision of resources and equipment. The most prominent item was the project's contribution to teachers' professional development. It was noteworthy that one-quarter of the trainers did not think the project had raised administrators' awareness of the importance of teacher training.

**Table 5.5.1 Areas in which the project has made an impact (N = 12)**

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Strongly agree (N)</i>	<i>Agree (N)</i>	<i>Strongly disagree (N)</i>	<i>Disagree (N)</i>
It has contributed significantly to teachers' professional development.	9	3	0	0
It has provided considerable resources and equipment.	5	5	1	1
It has contributed to the influence of the university.	6	6	0	0
It has raised administrators' awareness of the importance of teacher training.	2	5	0	3

What factors do you think have helped the project make an impact?

It was found, as is indicated in Table 5.5.2, that there was recognition of all the six factors to varying degrees. The factors that stood out were the highly committed and qualified team, the resources and equipment, and its reputation as a course run by two governments. 'Support at various levels' received the smallest number of strongest endorsers.

**Table 5.5.2 Factors that have helped the project make an impact (N = 12)**

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Strongly agree (N)</i>	<i>Agree (N)</i>
Its reputation as a course run by two governments	6	4
The resources and equipment	6	5
The connection of the course with degree programmes	5	4
Support at various levels (e.g. provincial, institutional)	2	8
The highly committed and qualified team	7	5
The need for qualified English teachers and ESP practitioners	4	6

In what areas should the project make a greater impact than hitherto?

The four areas in which the project should seek to make a greater impact than it has to date were highly endorsed. The results are presented in Table 5.5.3.

**Table 5.5.3 Areas in which the project should make a greater impact than hitherto (N= 12)**

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Strongly agree (N)</i>	<i>Agree (N)</i>
Staff development and team building	7	4
Resources development	6	5
Relevance of the training course to trainees' needs	4	7
Recruitment	7	5

What local factors need to be taken into account for the project's longer-term sustainability?

It was found, as is shown in Table 5.5.4 that there was a high endorsement of the eight factors relating to the local context that needed to be taken into consideration.

At least ten of the twelve trainers agreed or strongly agreed with each of these features as ones that were relevant to consideration of the project's longer-term sustainability.

**Table 5.5.4 Local factors that should be taken into account for the project's longer-term sustainability (N = 12)**

<i>Local factors</i>	<i>Strongly agree (N)</i>	<i>Agree (N)</i>
The level of commitment required of the teachers who undertake the course	6	4
The recognition given to the project team	8	2
The encouragement and support given to the project team	7	4
Tension between project ideas and practices and prevailing ones	5	6
The morale of teachers in adult education institutions	5	5
The current levels of teacher expertise	7	4
The resources for language teaching in adult education institutions	4	7
The current levels of support and encouragement given to adult education institutions	7	3

What steps might be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability?

There emerged a consistently high endorsement of the five steps provided in the questionnaire. As Table 5.5.5 shows, three of them were noteworthy: more flexibility of approaches to delivering courses, continuing support from various levels to the project and follow-up support to trainees.

**Table 5.5.5 Steps that could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability (N = 12)**

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Strongly agree (N)</i>	<i>Agree (N)</i>
Compromise between new methods and traditional ones	7	4
More flexibility of approaches to delivering courses	4	8
Continuing support from various levels to the project	7	5
Follow-up support to the trainees	4	8
Strengthening of the project team	5	6

## **Chapter 6**

### **Perspectives of Project A Course Participants about the Programme (2)**

This chapter concerns perceptions of Project A trainers and trainees of the initiative generated from the interview data, which are intended to serve as complementary findings to those that were yielded from the questionnaires and presented in the preceding chapter. Findings for two groups are delineated separately. Analyses of trainers' perspectives about the programme are described first. Then they are followed by discussion of the full-time and part-time trainees' perspectives. This chapter concludes with a synthesis of the two perspectives.

#### **Trainers' Perspectives about the Programme**

Seven dimensions of trainers' perspectives about the programme were explored in the interviews: their perceptions of the goals of the project, including changes of the goals and their views about the modifications, their expectations of getting involved in the project, their working experience on the project, their opinions about the one-year course in particular, and most importantly their views about the impact achieved up to the time of interviews, the longer-term sustainability and cross-cultural issues that had emerged in their project work experience. These interrelated questions revolved around the overriding purpose of exploring crucial factors associated with the longer-term sustainability of the project, i.e. factors that were perceived as having been influential in leading to the realised impacts and those perceived as having been overlooked in the process and as having consequently undermined the effects of the project. The investigation of these contributing and inhibitive factors could, it was considered, shed light on challenges and constraints in the endeavours to enhance the project's longer-term sustainability from the trainers' perspectives. Trainers' viewpoints about what might be done to enhance the prospects for longer-term sustainability, as an equally important focus, are subsumed



under this overarching objective.

### **Trainers' perceptions of goals of the project**

A number of salient themes emerged from the interviews in the light of trainers' views about original goals of the project, changes of goals, reasons for the changes and their attitudes to the changes and adaptations that had been made accordingly.

There was a general consensus about the goals of the project among the trainers. Six trainers expressed their opinion that the project had been originally intended to develop the expertise of English teachers within the province. Nevertheless, slight differences were apparent in terms of the targets of training and areas of training. Two trainers' perceptions were more specific, as compared to the other trainers' perception that the project sought to train English teachers. They thought the training was intended to cater for the needs of English teachers from AEIs within the province, which can be shown from the following two quotes.

*Initially the goal was mainly focused on teacher training. The mission statement was to train teachers from adult education institutions in the province. (Tr01 11-14)*

*The primary one was teacher training. The target was English teachers in adult education institutions in the province. This was the original objective. (Tr03 14-15)*

There was also a slight divergence of opinions about the areas of focus on the programme. Two trainers had the impression that the training had been focused on four language skills, general English teaching methodology and ESP course design, while one reported that the original focal areas were English teaching methodology and ESP course design, while one suggested that the focus had been language skills and teaching methodology.

*Improvement of English teachers' English language proficiency within the province, expansion of teachers' knowledge and teaching methods and development of expertise in three areas of ESP. (Tr06)*

*So a lot of effort was put in language training. Secondly, teaching methodology and ESP were also given much emphasis. (Tr07 130-31)*

*The project was intended to improve their English language teaching. It sought to contribute to the development of trainees' English skills and useful perceptions about how they should treat their students. The trainees will then take these ideas back to their own institutions. (Tr05 27-30)*

*The project aimed to provide training in English teaching methodology to English teachers in the province. The second one was the aim of ESP training. (Tr02 106-08)*

It is noteworthy that two trainers mentioned their confusion about the project goals in the beginning. One trainer put it down to not having been given relevant information about the goals, and a lack of training.

The trainers' comments on the change of goals highlighted two important features. First, the target of training had been shifted from English teachers in AEIs to English learners from diverse backgrounds, although the primary target remained that of English teachers or professionals working in English-related contexts due to the low recruitment. The target of training had been less restrictive depending on the availability of trainees. However, teacher training was seen as an important distinctive feature of the programme to be maintained.

*My view is that our project is a teacher training programme, it's where its distinctiveness is. If this feature is lost, we will lose our advantages. Therefore, on the one hand we have been trying not to go too far from our original goal, on the other hand we have been attempting to fully exploit our resources, every individual's specialised expertise. Our focus is on teacher training. However, in order to develop, we need funds to sustain, we also recruit some non-English teachers to generate income, otherwise it would be very difficult to keep it going. (Tr01 22-29)*

Second, despite the common view that there had been changes in the focus of training, there were minor differences in the trainers' perceptions about the current focus. Three trainers thought the focus was on English training and first-degree courses, with the weighting of teaching methodology and ESP substantially reduced.

*But since 2000 when I came back there has been a big departure from this objective. The focus has been shifted to English training. There has been a significant change between 2000 and 2002. (Tr03 15-18) ....Our current focus is on degree courses for three-year diploma holders. (24-25)*

*Changes have occurred due to the changes in the intakes. The third goal (ESP training) hasn't been realised. Efforts have been made to realise the second goal (teaching methodology training). The first goal (language training) is the focus. (Tr06 14-16)*

*Since they left (the discontinuity of the British input), the focus has been shifted to language training and the weightings of teaching methodology and ESP have been reduced. (Tr03 102-04)*

One trainer suggested that the changes had occurred gradually in the last few years subject to the differing needs of trainees. The focus was switched from teacher training first to general English and teaching methodology, and subsequently to

## English training.

*The first three cohorts were focused on teacher training, but with the change of backgrounds of the trainees, they seemed to have come from diverse backgrounds, not only from institutions. They did not expect English for special purposes. They expected general English and general English teaching methodologies. So we had some changes according to their needs. But now there has emerged a new change, that is, the fifth cohort is more focused on the language improvement. (Tr04 37-43)*

Three views about reasons for changes of goals emerged from four interviews. One attributed the changes to two factors: lack of support from the educational management at the provincial level and the unsettled problem of accreditation as a consequence.

*But as far as I know, this kind of support in policies is no longer existent. Besides that, because the problem of certification has never been resolved, the attraction of our project has been declining. (Tr03 22-28)*

A second put it down to the change of trainees in their backgrounds and their expectations.

*I feel the overall goal of teacher training has not been significantly changed, but some minor changes have happened due to our trainees' backgrounds. ...They did not expect English for special purposes. They expected general English and general English teaching methodologies. So we had some changes according to their needs. (Tr04 27-41)*

*Changes have occurred due to the changes in the intakes. (Tr06 14-17)*

A third perspective considered the low recruitment as a crucial factor, which in turn created a gap between the intended project goals and the trainees' expectations, and consequently led to modification of goals.

*I think it was modified due to the low recruitment and the gap between the goals and the teacher trainees' expectations. For example, some teacher trainees came for multiple purposes, they expected a certificate, improvement in both their language and their teaching. (Tr07 18-21)*

Trainers' attitudes to the changes of goals and practices were divided. Three trainers were positive about the changes. One of them thought 'those changes were inevitable, based on the results of needs analysis'. One considered change as 'inevitable' and saw it as effective in implementing the project ideas.

*They are very characteristic of Chinese training. The essence of the project has been carried through – the new teaching methods. This is the most important. (Tr02 32-35)*

He/she continued to emphasise its purpose of adaptation to the local educational context.

*I think it was certainly an inevitable process. The project is based in China, so it must be adapted to the local people and local context. If you stick to the original framework mechanically and rigidly, the chances of success would be very slim. So I think it is inevitable and it must be adapted if we want it to become a genuine Chinese training centre. (Tr02 37-41)*

One trainer was of the positive opinion that the change was ‘appropriate’ and emphasised its potential benefit to the project development in two ways: boosting its recruitment and its breadth of influence. He/she said:

*I think first, it can help the project recruitment. Second, it can largely expand its influence. (Tr07 28-29)*

In the meantime, he/she also stressed the importance of ‘developing it in a good direction in order to achieve its impact’, which he/she meant the need to ‘establish a high-profile project known to people’.

Opposite views about the effect of the changes also emerged from the interviews, expressed by two trainers. One referred to it as ‘having a devastating effect on the project’; and the other one saw it as ‘a very disappointing change’, which is revealed in the quote below.

*If our focus is still on teacher training, it would contribute more to teacher trainers’ development of expertise. My regret is that my ideas I had after coming back from the UK can only be partly implemented, not largely implemented as before. I have found it difficult to live with it. The trainees’ standard is getting lower. Their English is even worse than non-English majors’. The level of challenge to the trainers is reducing. (Tr03 30-39)*

## **Trainers’ expectations**

There emerged a high endorsement of improvement of English proficiency and teaching methods as two major expectations. The trainers saw working on the project as a potential opportunity of honing their expertise in those two areas. They recognised a number of advantages of getting involved in the project, which would contribute to the fulfilment of their expectations. First, going abroad would provide them with an opportunity to obtain theoretical knowledge about up-to-date teaching methodologies. Two trainers expressed this expectation in the interviews, one of whom said:

*The most important expectation was to go abroad ... I was keen to learn the up-to-date teaching methodologies and to go abroad. Although I had been a teacher for eleven years by*



*1997, I knew very little about teaching methodologies, especially the up-to-date British teaching methodologies. (Tr02 51-55)*

They perceived overseas training as a beneficial experience that would broaden their horizons in the field of ELT.

Second, the British colleagues were considered as facilitators for their professional development. They valued the English-speaking environment and the expertise of the British colleagues in ELT. Three trainers made reference to this expectation and one of them made the following remarks:

*The first one was the British colleagues. Because my language proficiency would have deteriorated without much practice. I was aware of it. I expected to speak English in that environment. (Tr05 86-89)*

Third, the well-qualified team, namely the Chinese project members was seen as of potential benefit to their enhancement of their professional qualities through working with them several years. This view was voiced by two young trainers. The quote below was extracted from an interview with the youngest project team member.

*The project team were all key members of staff in the faculty with high expertise in teaching and professional competence. I was curious since the criteria for selection of team members were very demanding. I was itching to have a try. (Tr07 46-50)*

Fourth and finally, the up-to-date project facilities and resources were considered by two trainers as important advantages of working on the project, which would in turn help to boost their professional competence.

In a nutshell, the trainers aspired to develop their English proficiency and teaching by means of receiving systematic training in the field of applied linguistics for ELT, working with British colleagues and the committed project team members, and making use of the project facilities and resources.

### **Trainers' views about project impacts**

Trainers' viewpoints about project impacts covered four dimensions: realised impacts achieved to date, unrealised impacts, contributing factors that had led to the

realised impacts and constraining factors that had hampered the implementation process. These four aspects are addressed separately as follows.

### Realised impacts achieved to date

Four strands about realised impacts were yielded in the interviews with the trainers. The impacts were salient on a) the trainees, including part-time and full-time cohorts, b) the trainers, i.e. their personal development, c) the project development and its influence, d) the university where the project was based and the faculty that assigned the trainers to undertake the programme.

### *Project impacts on trainees*

The achieved impacts on the trainees were three-fold. The first was on the trainees in general terms; the second, on the full-time trainees; and the third on the part-time trainees.

Comments on the influence on trainees in general were concerned with three aspects: their improvement of their teaching, career prospects and broadening their horizons. Two trainers mentioned the project's effect on trainees' teaching, one of whom commented:

*Teachers were trained in teaching methods. They felt they had learned useful teaching methods which helped them solve the problems in their day-to-day teaching. (Tr02 219-25)*

One trainer recognised the influence of the course on the trainees in broadening their horizons, which is revealed in his/her statements below.

*It was an eye-opener for the trainees. What they learned here was totally new to them. (Tr04 389-405)*

It was also reported that the training experience had brought about better employment prospects for some trainees, which is shown in this quote.

*Some teachers, after being trained, became key members of staff in their own institutions and are playing a very important role in their teaching reforms and their own teaching. ... Some non-English teachers started to be interested in teaching and transferred to teaching posts, and their teaching was very popular. Some trainees were employed by some institutions immediately after their trial teaching. Some trainees even got accepted before they got their degrees and their graduation certificates. The institutions promised to accept them as a*

*formal staff member once they got their degrees. (Tr01 34-44)*

The project impacts on the full-time trainees were manifest in their enthusiasm in applying new teaching methods in their own teaching contexts.

*In our full-time course, some trainees made attempts to use the new methods straightaway in their own teaching. For example, a teacher from a middle school applied the methods immediately. The following day he/she told us about it. Another teacher from an AEI another example. I introduced some methods for dictation, he/she used them immediately and found it very welcomed by his/her students. Once they see the usefulness of new methods, they would apply them immediately. (Tr01 70-81)*

The impacts on the part-time trainees were reflected in their boosted interest in teaching, their receptiveness to new teaching methods and change of their beliefs. One trainer was very pleased about their apparently higher enthusiasm in teaching as a result of their training.

*I found they were very keen to apply what they had learned to their own teaching practice. ... They were eager to explore issues in their teaching reforms. ... They very much welcomed our help and guidance. (Tr01 47-56)*

He/she was also satisfied that some trainees thought highly of the programme and had become open to the new ideas and eager to apply them in their own day-to-day teaching.

*What they learned here in one year was more valuable and more practical than what they had learned before elsewhere. (Tr01 332-36)*

*Some teachers talked with me at breaks about how to improve their speaking, etc. or how to improve their teaching. ... I have found some of our methods are acceptable to them, and they have started reflecting on their own teaching influenced by us. They have realised the need to change. (Tr01 65-81)*

Moreover, he/she observed a more pleasing effect on the part-time trainees. They had undergone changes of beliefs and behaviour in their teaching to varying degrees.

*The part-time trainees were also positive about it. There are varying degrees of changes in their teaching. Some trainees have significant changes. Some have very little change, but there is change. I think the main change in them is in their beliefs, their values and behaviours. (Tr01 400-04)*

### **Project impacts on trainers**

The impacts that the project has achieved on the trainers were noteworthy in four aspects. The first was the development of their professional expertise as teachers, which encompassed development of their professionalism, improvement of their

teaching with new perceptions of ELT and an updated and increased repertoire of teaching methods and techniques, their enhanced research capacities as a result of their working experience on the project and overseas training in ELT. The second was their enhanced experience as teacher trainers. The third was the development of administrative skills, and the fourth was their increased cross-cultural communication competence.

The first area of impact on the trainers received a high endorsement among the trainers. One trainer was very impressed with his/her benefit in professional development as a teacher. He/she acknowledged that he/she had become more professional and had developed reflective and critical thinking about western methods.

*It has broadened my horizons in teaching, and also made me realise that some aspects of their practices were not very successful. For example, I wonder whether they could have been more flexible, whether they could have taken into account the local context and taken more flexible measures (Tr04 108-33)*

He/she also recognised that he/she had acquired more competence to cope with various tasks and to meet diverse students' needs in his/her teaching.

*I've become more professional in all aspects, getting closer to a professional standard. I'm more competent than before in course design and teaching. Another point about professionalisation is the attitude towards students. My roles are more varied, seeing students as objects of learning, objects of teaching, or as recipients. I feel as a teacher I'm more flexible than before. I'm more adaptable to various roles. (Tr04 173-81)*

*You (I) can design a course according to student's needs and can implement it, and adapt your course design to students' needs. (Tr04 296-315)*

This view of the impact on trainers' teaching was echoed by some other trainers. Two trainers remarked that the experience on the project had changed their perceptions of ELT. One of them said:

*I have gained a completely new perception of ELT. I have come to realise that the ELT is very interesting. I was interested in it, but not so much as now. ... I didn't know it involved some many issues ... But I have gained more interest since I came back from Lancaster. (Tr02 154-67)*

The trainers' improvement of their teaching methods was a recurring theme. One trainer made the following interesting comments upon the effect of using communicative teaching methods.



*When they first came, they expected us to lecture like traditional lecturers. They sat there listening and taking notes. They were not used to the interactions in the class. But later on they got used to it and liked it, and they changed their perception. The conflict was tense. After they experienced the change, they were no longer used to the traditional teaching methods. The 1999 group felt they were not used to the teacher-centred teaching any more. (Tr03 192-98)*

One more impact on the trainers' personal professional development as teachers was their enhanced research abilities. Both novice and experienced trainers recognised their benefits in this aspect. A young trainer stated:

*In the past I saw doing research as mysterious, but the staff development sessions helped me greatly to familiarise myself with theories, e.g. of reading and made me feel that theory is not unattainable. They made me start to try to integrate my teaching with theories. This is the biggest benefit – it helped me to take the first step. I had been a teacher for quite a few years and I did need some help and guidance in this respect. So the project has helped me to make a significant start. From then on I have been trying to develop myself in this direction. (Tr07 54-61)*

While an experienced trainer was impressed with this as well, reporting:

*I was always interested in doing research. But I didn't know where to start from at first although I had just completed a master's course then. After working on the project for a period of time, I came to know how to start. I have become more active than before. (Tr05 143-47)*

Another senior trainer made a long list of research projects and publications which were derived from their working experience on the project.

The last impact on the trainers' personal professional development as teachers was their M.A. training experience abroad, as acknowledged by two trainers, which on the one hand allowed them to obtain higher qualifications, and on the other enabled them 'to integrate theories with practice in their day-to-day teaching practice'.

The second area of realised impact was the trainers' gradual acquisition of perceptions of distinctions between the roles of teachers and teacher trainers through several years' practice. Amongst their views priority was given to different assets of teacher trainers. One trainer considered that teacher trainers were expected to possess higher expertise in handling textbooks and stronger research competence.

*The first one is the ability to make use of textbooks. It sets very high demands on teachers' exploiting textbooks. The other aspect is teachers' research abilities because teachers need to keep updating their abilities. (Tr03 91-93)*

One trainer stressed the challenges of tackling various relationships and adaptability as well as profound subject knowledge, a good command of English, flexible manipulation of teaching methods to cater for students' diverse needs.

*The role of teacher trainer on this project is a very difficult one. It requires us to deal with several kinds of relationship. First of all, it represents the interest of the project. This is the first consideration because you need to represent this. After all, you represent the interests of those you work for. So first of all I think we should effectively convey the essence (message) of the project to trainees. It includes implementing the courses and conducting teaching, in the meantime, make appropriate adaptations to students' needs. This is different from normal teachers. ... I also think teachers should be more tolerant. ... A teacher trainer is required to have more subject-matter knowledge than a teacher. You should set higher demands on yourself. For example, if you are an English teacher and an English teacher trainer, you shouldn't be just satisfied with your good English proficiency, or with your teaching methods, but rather you should be more advanced than just knowing. You should apply more effectively. You should be more advanced in theory and practice. What's more, you should have the ability to integrate theory and practice. (Tr04 205-42)*

Two trainers attached much importance to 'high level of commitment, and higher level of English proficiency'; and one of them recognised the importance of 'the readiness to collaborate with people, professional competence and receptiveness to new ideas'.

The third area of impact on the trainers was expansion of their capacity in administrative skills. One trainer acknowledged that 'systematic training in teaching had led to more understanding of management dimensions in teaching and project operation'. One trainer expressed his/her appreciation of project team members' involvement in project management in the following quotation.

*Our responsibilities were allocated among the team. The team were actively involved in the teaching and management. (Tr05 309-11)*

The fourth area of impact on the trainers was enhanced cross-cultural communication competence. One trainer remarked that the collaboration with the British colleagues and the team had contributed to development of professionalism and mutual understanding. Another trainer's comment expressed the same view.

*This kind of cross-cultural programme has allowed us to communicate with expatriate colleagues. We can absorb some knowledge which is not available in the textbooks and apply them in our training. (Tr01 526-29)*

## *Realised impacts on project development*

The impacts on the project development were resources, staff development, course quality and dissemination of project influence through trainees. Two trainers perceived the resource materials as beneficial to both staff and students in the project and in the faculty. One of them commented:

*One of the benefits of the project was concerned with the up-to-date resource materials. The resource centre is open to all the faculty staff and postgraduates. (Tr02 318-32)*

Team building or staff development was another area of impact, which would contribute to project development. One trainer made the following remarks:

*A team has been developed. Its influence will be radioactive, which can't be shown instantly. But as far as the course design is concerned, I feel the difference between the project team members and non-project team members is that project team are teacher trainers, while others are just teachers. ... A collaborative team has been developed. (Tr04 389-405)*

Besides, introduced by one of the trainers, a research-oriented team was set up on a voluntary basis, who had already undertaken a series of research projects. The project team introduced their teaching methods to students beyond the project and had been warmly welcomed. They gave presentations in workshops and conferences on various issues in teaching methodology and teacher training for AEIs. Two trainers delivered demonstration classes at the British Education Exhibition in 2000.

The quality of the training course was identified by one trainer as a payoff of the project, which is revealed in the quote below.

*This course excels the normal training courses in its efficacy. The trainees underwent enormous improvement when they finished their training. There was a big difference between their previous level and their current level. This is very impressive. Moreover, besides the elements of language learning and theory learning, the course tried to integrate theories and practice. (Tr07 102-06)*

The diffusion of influence of the project through the introduction by trainees of the teaching methods in their own contexts was an instance of the project impacts. As two trainers observed:

*Whether it be a large or small scale, the trainees all have more or less introduced our project impact to their own contexts. (Tr03 217-18)*

*Previous trainees spread its influence to new trainees. Trainees' teaching back in their own institutions was warmly welcomed. It has helped to boost the reputation of the university. (Tr06 90-91)*

## *Realised impacts on development of the faculty and university*

There emerged evidence to indicate that the project had impinged on the faculty and university development in terms of staff development, resources, and course development, which had in turn boosted the profiles of the faculty and the university. A number of quotes were illuminating as to its effect on the faculty development.

Its influence on course development:

*Some useful experience and working styles have been adopted in the English Department, ESP courses have been opened in the department and have been warmly welcomed. (Tr05 72-75)*

Its influence on resources:

*One of the benefits of the project was concerned with the up-to-date resource materials. The resource centre is open to all the faculty staff and postgraduates. (Tr02 318-32)*

Its influence on staff development:

*Another impact was the development of our faculty. A few colleagues joined the project although they didn't get an opportunity to go abroad. They also felt that had learned about project management, course design and theories about ELT. This has contributed to the faculty development and the staff development. (Tr02 219-25)*

Its impacts on the university were manifested in a variety of ways. One trainer provided concrete compelling examples to support this view. A series of new programmes mushroomed as a result of the project: new joint training programmes with other institutions within and beyond the province, an IELTS training and testing centre based in the university, British specialists' follow-up visits to help with the development of the project and the resources centre in 2000, and potential collaborative training programmes with overseas universities. These would, it was felt, contribute considerably to the reputation and influence of the university.

## **Trainers' perceptions about contributing factors**

There emerged four factors that had played an important role to achieve the effect discussed previously: resources, the team's quality and continuous effort, trainees' motivation to learn and the role of mediators at the team and university level.



The first factor was to do with the resources available to make implementation of plans materialise. The trainers were impressed with the up-to-dateness of the resource materials and hi-tech facilities.

*Our teaching materials, resources, equipment and project team. The resources are prestigious published by well-known publishing houses. (Tr03 183-86)*

*The teaching hardware is impressive as well, e.g. the up-to-date resource materials, teaching facilities, such as the OHPs, which were very rare at that time, the big screens and the computed-assisted learning. (Tr02 126-33)*

*The materials are up-to-date. Methods are new. Teaching facilities. Handouts instead of designated textbooks. That was an innovation. (Tr05 178-79)*

A second factor was the quality of the team and the sustained effort they had made. Five trainers attributed the realised impact to the team, the majority of whom 'had received MA training abroad and came back with new ideas', and were 'highly committed and open to new ideas and adaptable'. Also the team's 'steady accumulation of knowledge' and 'continuous exploration in the field of ELT and teacher training' were recognised as one of the crucial factors, as was indicated in one trainers' remark, 'the project team had been making enormous effort to achieve the impact and to upgrade ourselves'.

The trainers' adaptability was frequently highlighted in connection with the evolving nature of the programme, which has been discussed earlier in trainers' perspectives about project goals and change of goals. A typical example is provided to illustrate trainers' making modifications to the ESP component to meet the trainees' needs.

*But later on the composition of our trainees changed, consequently modifications of the structure of our original courses needed to be made accordingly. For example, the courses on course design, such as Business English, ESP course design, English for tourism and English for international trade have basically been cancelled, after business English is taught this summer. The reason is that our trainees are different now. The target situation analysis and needs analysis indicate that they are not important to them. They don't need to design a course, or design a syllabus, so our course should be more practical so that they can benefit from our course instead of wasting their time. ... If you insist on teaching ESP, they completely have no idea, no interest, it would be pointless, so we need to change. (Tr01 81-105)*

As one of the characteristics of the team effort, the collaboration between the local project team members and the expatriate colleagues was recognised as one of the crucial contributing factors in this cross-cultural initiative, which sought to integrate

Chinese traditional with western beliefs about teaching and learning, together with management, and engendered tangible impacts.

There was abundant evidence about the positive outcome of adopting western teaching methods in the programme. As one trainer described, the use of communicative teaching methods and advanced teaching facilities contributed to the quality of teaching.

*The six team members who have been trained abroad employ up-to-date teaching methods, communicative, student-centred or learning-centred approach.... So overall the resources are very good, up-to-date, and teaching methods are up-to-date. (Tr02 126-33)*

One trainer had initially found it difficult to come to terms with the western belief that students were regarded as clients:

*Some ideas were challenging. In 1997 Martin expressed a view that students were clients. I couldn't understand him, I couldn't understand why. I thought students were students, they receive education, why regard them as clients in business. After the five years have passed, Chinese education has indeed become more market-oriented. There is a necessity to realise that you need students, but not the other way round. ... Without students, there will be no teachers. Such an idea would ensure the success of your programme. So our conceptions have been developed gradually. You need to recognise that the British colleagues' idea has a far-reaching effect. (Tr04 137-66)*

Communicative teaching methods were regarded as highly effective in teaching. As one trainer described, he/she 'preferred task-based and skill-based teaching', which he/she saw it as reflecting the essence of communicative approach and by which teachers attempted to foster various skills in students through integration of various methods. Another trainer appreciated the provision of plenty of opportunities for student talks, much use of handouts, high demand on students' autonomous learning, e.g. the need to search references themselves. A novice trainer appreciated task-based teaching practised by one of the senior trainers.

*His/her writing course was task-based. His/her teaching materials were rich and diverse and practical. Although the materials were quite difficult, she managed to involve most of the class. (Tr07 148-54)*

He/she then described how he/she made his/her students actively involved.

*First, he/she had very clear objectives for each session. Second, he/she moderated the degree of difficulty of the tasks to students' levels. Third, he/she monitored students in the process of the activities. (Tr07 148054)*

One trainer recognised the effect of integrating western approaches with Chinese ones in his/her teaching. Lecturing to provide background knowledge was seen as a necessary preliminary to the western fieldwork.

*We selected half of the book about hotel English, including checking in, checking out, facilities, schedules, and so on. We simulated a visit to the Shangrila Hotel. I integrated the activities in a trip before I lectured, and then thought about methods to teach these contents, and students did small assignments afterwards. (Tro4 275-79)*

Teaching materials were considered as one of the distinctive features conducive to the effective learning. Two trainers recognised eclectic use of materials as effective.

*A distinctive feature is its eclectic approach. Multiple textbooks were used for each course. The trainees can learn from different sources. (Tr07 162-63)*

*We have no designated textbooks. This has been maintained and I think it has been very effective. ... Teachers can give full play to their autonomy to design courses according to students' needs without textbooks. So when we go to other places to teach in the vacations, we don't take any designated textbooks. (Tr04 323-32)*

One trainer expressed the opinion that the course features, namely, 'with ESP course design, teaching methodology as important components', 'teacher-made course syllabi and authentic materials from the UK' were highly distinctive and effective.

Co-teaching, as one form of team work in undertaking teaching, was perceived by two trainers to be beneficial to trainers concerned and the quality of their teaching, although one of them acknowledged its anxiety-provoking effect on the observed and the lack of detailed and constructive feedback from the observer.

*It (co-teaching) presented some pressures on the trainers on the one hand, but provided opportunities to go deeper into our teaching. We learned from each other. Teaching practice and classroom observations were also distinctive. We specified focuses for observation. It was beneficial to both trainers and trainees. (Tr07 119-24)*

There emerged a high endorsement of some western ideas and practices in project management as facilitative factors. The main aspects that were commonly recognised were the professionalism of the expatriate colleagues and their perceptions about teaching and management, the supportive and equal working environment, team work, staff development programme offered by the two expatriate colleagues to the local project team members, and the consultancy visits paid on a regular basis.

The professionalism of the expatriate colleagues and their practices in project

management were seen as influential in the project team. One trainer showed his/her appreciation in his/her comments presented below.

*'Professionalism' is a very good concept. I think it was reflected in the British way of management. We are not personal, which is different from the complicated personal relationship in the Chinese way of management. ...The British colleagues had a clear plan with clear practical procedures. There was always a schedule for a goal. (Tr03 368-73)*

A young trainer was 'very impressed with the commitment and degree of scrupulousness of the British specialists'.

The supportive working environment was valued as one of the positive factors. The expertise and high level of commitment of the expatriate colleagues made the trainers feel stronger about the equal relationships existing in the project. One trainer expressed his/her views about the working environment and the professional qualities of expatriate colleagues.

*Democracy. Open discussions were held for important issues. It was open for all the issues, including lesson plans. I have to admit that the British colleagues were different, they were very experienced in teaching and coordinating interpersonal relationships and courses. They had specialised expertise in teaching. (Tr02 69-73)*

He/she highly treasured the equal relationship in the project.

*There were many opportunities to exchange ideas with the British colleagues as equals. The relationship was equal. (Tr02 126-33)*

Another trainer also expressed his/her admiration of the supportive environment.

He/she remarked:

*I think an environment of working with the British colleagues is a crucial factor. Their influence is substantial. Besides, you can develop your own environment, a micro one. After working for a period of time in this small environment, your styles and characteristics will be imprinted with the hallmarks of this environment. Also I think you have worked a few years with them, you have to learn a lot to be able to design your own course, select your own materials, organise fieldwork to gather information and to satisfy your students' needs. You never stop reading and learning. (Tr04 407-30)*

Harmonious relationship was the main feature of the working environment, but it also encouraged disagreements about work. One trainer noted:

*Despite some clashes that arose from work, we got on very well. The conflicts are professional. (Tr05 99-103)*

Team work was recognised as an important feature in the project work. One trainer was appreciative about the allocation of responsibilities and tackling various issues that arose from work.



*It has aroused everybody's initiatives. In team work every individual's value is recognised. Why do I say so? It depends on every individual's effort and contributions. The most valuable thing is team work. (Tr05 340-46)*

The staff development programme was considered as conducive to trainers in providing theoretical inputs and opportunities to reflect on theories and their practice of teaching and integrate them appropriately. Two trainers made comments as follows.

*I think the staff development programme is an immeasurable contribution. The staff development has benefited not only us, the project, but also the faculty. Its benefit is reflected in various ways and aspects. It benefits our trainees as well. (Tr03 278-80)*

*It offered weekly staff development sessions. There was a one-afternoon session every week. I think it integrated reflections on our past, our current situation and work and what we need for our future. It helped us to reflect. It made us more reflective. (Tr04 89-102)*

The visits paid by the project consultant was regarded as helpful in 'providing new teaching methods and theories and serving as guidelines for work'.

A third contributing factor from the trainers' perspectives was trainees' enthusiasm in learning and interest in new ideas and teaching methods. One trainer noted that 'teachers were keen to learn new teaching methods and techniques to solve the problems encountered in their work'. This was the receiving end of the teaching and learning process, without which desirable effects could not be ensured.

A fourth factor, in the trainers' view, was the roles of team leader and mediator at the university level. One trainer recognised them as important in 'establishing contact with the outside world'.

### **Trainers' perceptions about unrealised project impacts**

As discussed previously, the project has achieved positive impacts on various parties concerned: the course participants, the trainers and trainees, the project, the faculty and the university. Nevertheless, there were also areas in which hoped-for influence had failed to be realised. By and large, in the view of the trainers, impact could have been generated in three dimensions, which were interrelated and intertwined throughout the project implementation process. The first one and a most frequently

mentioned one was recruitment, which was considered as a hindrance to the project's yielding influence of more depth and width. One trainer said:

*I feel two aspects could have been changed. One is the recruitment. The course was more focused on the language improvement. It would have been better if the trainees had had higher degrees. Besides, we should have thought that our educational development was rapid and the market was big, and we should have thought of running courses jointly with a university abroad. (Tr04 108-33)*

A second envisaged unrealised impact was the unresolved issue of accreditation, which was seen as one of the reasons for the low enrolment. In the view of one trainer, certification would be an important issue to take into account for it to induce more impact. He/she expressed his/her views in the following quotation that certification, alongside trainees' uncertainty about the potential value of the training and the lack of flexibility of the project were the three main factors that had led to the dissatisfying recruitment.

*The poor enrolment has to do with the certification. Teachers have to devote their time and energy and money. If they can't obtain a useful certificate for their future promotion, they would be bound to hesitate. This is certain. And some teachers were not reimbursed. This is the first reason. The second reason was that the theories and teaching methods employed in the project were very new, and their use requires consideration of the teaching contexts, teaching facilities and their students' needs and preferences. They were not sure whether their students were receptive to their ideas and methods. One more reason was that our project was too confined to the original framework at the beginning. The course was meant for pure training, not for certification. The project would not be able to sustain itself without offering certification. (Tr02 234-43)*

A third unrealised impact was that the breadth and depth of impact were still limited. One trainer suggested that 'its impact was still confined within the province and there existed a need to expand its scale'.

### **Trainers' views about constraining factors**

From the trainers' point of view, constraining factors were firstly internal, i.e. those resulting from the project team itself; and secondly external, i.e. those coming from beyond the team. The internal factors were concerned with financial difficulties the project was faced with, management problems, failure to take into account institutional politics in recruitment, the high level of commitment required and burnout of the project team. The external reasons were related to low recruitment and the unresolved issue of certification.

The first element of the project-related factors was financial. A trainer explained the financial pressures the project had been under since the discontinuity of input from both governments apart from its training task.

*The main difficulty is financial, to be frank. ... The Faculty wishes it to be a cash-cow to achieve considerable economic effect through delivering courses. They have very high expectations of it in financial terms. (Tr01 143-46)*

This expectation proved to be demanding given the awkward constrained budgets.

*But now if you want the team to undertake teaching, you need to ensure the pay. We also need money for daily expenses, like stationary, we need them. Otherwise we won't have money for them. (Tr01 231-33)*

The second element regarding the project itself arose from problems in management. A number of trainers expressed their views about management pitfalls in a variety of aspects. One trainer suggested that the problem lay with the management at the team level and he/she placed hope in the faculty, which had started to take charge of the project. One trainer considered the difficult situation of the project was due to 'factors other than teaching, the management and policies'.

One trainer pointed out the differences in team members' characters, which in turn had undermined the cohesion of the team.

*... It's not easy to get on with each other. I think although the project is small, maybe due to various reasons, I think some people are not so committed, not so professional. There are many other factors. They are not like professionals. (Tr04 183-87)*

Lack of communication both between the local and expatriate staff was also seen as an inhibitive factor in the project management. One trainer mentioned his/her experience of having a breakdown of communication with an expatriate colleague.

*My working style is learning by doing. His/her (The English colleague's) approach was top-down. He/she would like us to accept his ideas. He/she, as an expert, assumed that we should accept his/her approach. You were not encouraged to explore on your own. He/she may have felt unhappy, but I didn't care. I like exploring. So he/she was strongly against me going abroad. He/she saw me as over-independent. He/she thought I had wasted a lot of time in exploring on my own, and too much effort wasted. Anyway I don't mean to denigrate him/her. He/she is a very good expert. This is one of the conflicts. It may have been due to the cultural differences. And I'm not good at communicating with people. ... Cultural differences did exist. (Tr02 168-83)*

Communication was not engaged among the local and expatriate staff members when culturally inappropriate procedures were practised in the team. A trainer regarded democracy as a highly endorsed feature in project management, however, he/she saw

over-democracy as unnecessary, which was never brought up for open discussion in the project. His/her view was shared by several colleagues.

*In the first academic year we very often spent one afternoon on some minor things which could have otherwise been decided by themselves. The lengthy discussions were not necessary. We ended up with no decisions because everybody had his own opinion. So it was very time-consuming. (Tr02 134-38)*

*Honestly, when the British colleagues were here, I felt some processes were a bit too complicated. I thought it was too complicated. (Tr04 594-600)*

*In the past we had an awful lot of meetings. They looked hectic (busy), but the efficiency was not very satisfactory. (Tr01 301-07)*

*Sometimes it was too democratic. Whatever issue, important or trivial, was discussed in the project. That was not appropriate. ... Their bottom-up management model is not appropriate here. (Tr07 258-67)*

Apart from the cross-cultural misunderstandings in the team, there also existed breakdown of communication between local staff members, which failed to be handled promptly and undermined collaboration and cohesion of the team.

*The most frustrating time is when some matters become very complicated. They concern personal relationships. My frustration is very much to do with this aspect. Some people have a different understanding of a particular matter, and they would say something detrimental to the team cohesion. (Tr01 349-52)*

*When the British colleagues were here, we understood the project and what we did more. We had regular meetings and communications. It was more equal and transparent because we were constantly informed of what had been done and needed to be done. We were clearer about our jobs and the project. Later we became unclear. We didn't know how many trainees had been enrolled. Sometimes it happened that we found two more trainees when we went into the classroom. ... We didn't have an overall outline, the details of the background of the trainees, the numbers of trainees, and how they were recruited. This has led to the situation in the middle of our teaching that some trainees were puzzled, some were disinterested, and some trainees were very interested. (Tr04 532-43)*

The occurrence of breakdown of communication was compounded by the reluctance on the part of the staff members to communicate with each other.

*But the obvious problem is that nobody would like to point it out and rectify it, including myself. I can't be bothered to say anything about it. This may be a kind of culture. The hierarchy is more obvious. The relationship was equal. Now I feel the hierarchy. Managers don't communicate with the team members that much. ... This is not a matter of autonomy, but of management. It requires a coordinator and communications. This is not professional. We have lost cohesion. (Tr04 557-84)*

One trainer gave an example of the practice of evaluation, which made her feel the system was lacking in transparency. However, he/she had never made an attempt to communicate with the people concerned.



*I'm very Chinese. I kept quiet. Up till now I don't know who did it. I told my trainees about it. They said they didn't write any comments like that. So I still don't know who did this. But I do feel that we should be open like westerners. ... It's ridiculous. ... There is no need to attack a good teacher. It may have been a misunderstanding. If the project keeps this style of management, I'm very pessimistic. (Tr02 287-95)*

The external constraining factors stemmed from recruitment and accreditation. One trainer pointed out that teachers were reluctant to come due to their personal concerns about funding and security of their posts.

*They can't afford time to come on the full-time training course. If we just focus on the full-time course, many people can't spare time to come. The competition is very severe. If they want to come, they will have to ask for absence of leave from their employers. The likely consequence is that their employers are unwilling to fund their training or pay their salaries. Some employers are even worse. They would not keep their posts for them, so the teachers have to quit. As a result teachers are under great pressure. They don't have the courage to risk losing their jobs to come here on the full-time course. It involves teachers' personal concerns, pressures from institutions and the lack of awareness on the part of the institutional administrators. ... The administrators would therefore no longer care too much about your leaving and they would have new staff coming. Apart from this, they very much doubt the possibility of teachers coming back after their training. So there are virtually no institutions that are willing to release their teachers and reimburse their training fees or keep teachers' posts and pay for them. That is extremely rare. (Tr01 113-29)*

One trainer attributed the low recruitment to the issues of accreditation and accommodation.

*There are some other factors as well, such as degrees and accommodation, which would seriously affect recruitment unless it is given serious consideration. ... The recruitment is very small although there is supposedly a big market. Most people are degrees-oriented. If they can obtain a degree elsewhere at a lower price and with less effort, they wouldn't choose to come here. (Tr07 209-19)*

A supporting example was given by another trainer, who suggested that the trainers were very satisfied with the course except for the failure to obtain a degree as a reward and recognition of their training experience.

*The trainees were very happy with their experience on the course. They said they had learned a lot from our project. The only regret was the lack of recognition at the society level. If you end up with a bachelor's degree or an MA, which are visible and recognisable, but they didn't get one, this is what they regretted. (Tr03 236-40)*

One more example was provided by another trainer.

*If their training is not recognised and accredited, it would be even more difficult for us. It seems to be very hard to solve. (Tr03 229-33)*

A further likely reason for lack of take up was the cost of the programme. One trainer pointed out that 'the course fees were quite high for the trainees relative to their incomes'.

To sum up, the main constraining factors, in the trainers' view, were from internal and external directions. The internal factors they pinpointed were the financial and managerial pitfalls, i.e. the challenges of coping with the large amount of work with limited human and financial resources on the one hand, and management drawbacks on the other. The perceived external ones were lack of support to teachers from their institutions and educational authorities in practical terms, e.g. financial assistance and recognition of their training experience to enable them to come on the course. These two factors were considered as impediments to the project's potential to generate more depth and width of impact.

### **Trainers' perceptions of the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability**

Trainers' views about the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability comprised two aspects: barriers to ensuring its longer-term sustainability and measures that could be taken to enhance its longer-term sustainability.

#### **Barriers to longer-term sustainability**

Barriers to its longer-term sustainability were subdivided into two kinds. One was those that hampered the dissemination of the ideas and methods endorsed and promoted in the project to trainees' home institutions; and the other one concerned those that hindered the sustainability of the project base. The first type of barrier was recognised by three trainers. One impediment was the institutional environment which was not felt to be supportive to the application of new ideas and teaching methods. One trainer expressed her concern about the likely tension between the new ideas and those in the trainees' home institutions. Another trainer noted that 'teacher-made syllabi were not realistic given the fact that teachers did not have the autonomy to choose their own textbooks; handouts and excessive discussions would result in slow progression of teaching; and some teaching methods were not feasible in large classes in normal teaching situations'. The third trainer made reference to the

practical constraint of large classes, which would be an obstacle to the application of communicative teaching methods.

The second type of barrier was related to the sustainability of the project base itself, and was similar to factors that constrained the project's impact. The barriers included internal ones on the one hand, which came from the project itself involving pitfalls in teaching and management; and external ones on the other, which resulted from sources beyond the project team, encompassing the existing prevalent perceptions of INSET, teachers' personal concerns, lack of support from various parties to the project team and teachers who aspired to upgrade their expertise through training (e.g. accreditation, financial assistance and recognition of training) and its inevitable consequence, low recruitment.

The internal factors involved lack of communication between the staff members, especially between the team leader and other team members, financial difficulties of the project, burnout of the project team and pitfalls in teaching. As noted earlier in the discussions on the constraining factors for the realised impacts, there existed a breakdown of communication at the project team level. Here again, several trainers mentioned this problem as a detriment to the sustainability of the project. It was found that there existed contrasting views about the management method being practised since the discontinuity of input from both governments. The majority of the team considered the current project management was deficient in terms of democracy and openness, while only one trainer saw it as efficient and showing respect for colleagues. The following four quotes present two contrasting views about the management. The first one represents a positive attitude.

*Our management is more simplified than before, but the efficiency is higher than before. In the past we had an awful lot of meetings. We now have meetings only when necessary. I'm quite satisfied with our current management and the operation of our course. We haven't had any unexpected accidents in teaching resulting from management pitfalls. ... Everybody has the value of keeping face. General issues relating to the course and trainees are suitable for discussion. Particular individual problems can be treated privately. This would help maintain a rapport in the team. (Tr01301-13)*

While by contrast the other three were negative about the management.

*We can be more flexible, but at the same time we need to devolve part of the team leader's responsibilities. Otherwise I wonder whether one person can manage everything. (Tr04 594-600)*

*I was not very clear about the courses and responsibilities. This is different from the cooperation stage when everything was open. I was a bit surprised and depressed for some arrangements. (Tr02 78-87)*

*I feel communication is decreasing. At the cooperation stage we had weekly project meetings. We discussed together over important issues. As far as I can remember, the number of meetings has been decreasing since 2000, and since 2001 there have been no meetings. The problem of over-flexibility is very serious. (Tr03 282-96)*

Minimal effort was made on the part of either side to alleviate the breakdown of communication. One trainer explained his/her reason for keeping quiet about the problems that had arisen.

*I can't live with some phenomena. But I didn't talk to him/her. It depends on the person. Some people don't like communicating. ... Some people are not worth talking to. What's the point of talking to people who are not worth talking to? The situation can't be changed. (Tr04 606-11)*

Financial pressure was another obstacle in project development. One trainer noted:

*The main difficulty is financial, to be frank. On the one hand, the Faculty wishes to develop it as a income-making unit (making it profitable), to achieve considerable economic effect through delivering courses. (Tr01 143-46)*

However, under the high pressure from the faculty, the project was encountering a serious financial difficulty of maintaining adequate supplies of stationary.

The burnout of the team was seen as a potential hindrance to the project's further development. A series of problems remained unresolved: the high level of commitment required, the heavy workload, little opportunity for further development, the shortage of staff and the weaning effect since the discontinuity of input from two governments.

Four trainers mentioned the heavy workload of the project team members. They had dual commitments as full-time staff members in the faculty and on the project. One trainer remarked that he/she found it very difficult to spare time to do research. Another trainer felt drained after working a few years on the project and he/she pointed out that this situation had not yet received due attention from the Faculty.

*I feel worn out, exhausted, especially the first year. Commitment is necessary, but the team members' physical conditions haven't been appreciated. ... I have devoted too much. ... I*



*have to admit that I have learned a lot from it, but the energy consumption is beyond my endurance. This deserves more attention for the future development. (Tr02 186-92)*

Two trainers expressed their desire to charge up their batteries when addressing the staff development programme, which was no longer provided.

*The staff development programme, which I really appreciated, is no longer provided. If only we had some references. At that time we were asked to respond to some readings, we felt the pressure because some topics were unfamiliar. We needed to read a few books for background knowledge to make comments on one article. A systematic plan for project staff development is no longer existent. (Tr03 282-96)*

The problem of burnout of the experienced team members was compounded by the shortage of new recruits and the lack of experience of administrators in the project. Two trainers acknowledged the awkward situation of shortage of staff. One of them commented:

*Backup members need to be recruited and trained to give play to their roles. If it entirely depends on the returned core members, it would be very difficult. This is quite weak in the project. The current situation is that they just get some teachers at the last minute for a course. They haven't received any training. The teaching quality is declining. There lacks an overall consideration of the personnel allocation for each course. (Tr07 226-30)*

The project management did not turn out as smooth as previously due to the inexperience of the administrators, who joined in the project in the later stage and had little experience in administrative work. As one trainer suggested, they 'needed time and practice to mature'.

On top of the management problems, there were perceived drawbacks in course delivery, which the trainers thought would undermine the quality of the course and the influence of the programme. The problems of 'over-flexibility' and 'omission of important elements in the programme, e.g. assessment and evaluations were considered as detrimental to the project's future development. It was also found that 'the failure to recruit trainees from ideal target groups (English teachers from AEIs in the province)', 'the heterogeneity of background of trainees and the generally low English levels' and 'their lack of motivation in learning' contributed to de-motivation of the trainers and deterioration of the course quality.

*We don't want too many non-English teachers. We don't want those three-year-diploma holders who are not specialised in English. Their English is very poor. If we admit too many people like that, they have paid for the course, should we award them degrees or not? (Tr01 259-262)*

*Some teachers haven't thought about their self-development. They haven't realised the*

*potential effect of this training on their careers. (Tr01 456-458)*

*My feeling is that teachers made a lot of effort, while the students were not positive about it. Take my ESP for example, the highest participation was 12 against 24 of the total number. Only half of the class came to the class. It was the same as Song Yi's class. (Tr03 125-28)*

External factors concerned a series of issues, involving a) unavailability of support to the project from various parties concerned above the project team, e.g. their lack of awareness of the value of the project and the commitment of the team, failure to provide the project team with financial assistance and human and physical resources, failure to settle the issue of accreditation, insufficient effort made in publicity and recruitment; b) the existing perceptions about INSET in China, and c) lack of institutional support to teachers who aspired to be trained.

There was much evidence to indicate the lack of awareness on the part of the Faculty of the value of the project and paucity of recognition of the commitment of the team members. The perception by the Faculty of the project as commercial was very disappointing to one trainer.

*The Faculty is now seeing the project as a commercial project, not an academic one. One of the elements in the self-access centre I managed in the resources centre is leader-training. Leader's awareness of showing support is an important factor. I think this is lacking in our project. I think the support from the University is Ok, but the communication between the faculty and the university is lacking. It's to do with the style of the team leader. I don't mean the Faculty isn't concerned about the project, or the team leader doesn't want to communicate with us. I feel that communication and mutual understanding is not enough. (Tr05 48-56)*

*The two kinds of training would have totally different effects. The outreach courses are commercial. Necessary facilities and environment are not available. The trainees would be still like frogs in a well. They wouldn't know the width of an ocean beyond it. If they could come here, at least they would be able to know the width of a river. It would be better than a well. (Tr05 495-99)*

As a result of the lack of awareness of the role of the project, in one trainer's view, the Faculty therefore provided the project with lip-service.

*I still remember in 2000 the British specialist thought of setting up the biggest self-access centre in China during her visit of our project. But my impression was that the Faculty leaders were not particularly familiar with this area. They promised to support it, but there has been no tangible support since she left. (Tr03 345-48)*

They also consequently failed to recognise the team's work in financial terms.

*It's very time-consuming. And it's not rewarding financially. Teachers get better paid for teaching elsewhere. Pay is a very important factor. (Tr07 237-38)*

The lack of support and recognition of the project by the Faculty led to the project's situation declining and disenchantment of the team members.

*The resources haven't been fully exploited, including the references and teaching staff. If this is what the project is like, then anybody can undertake it. It doesn't have to be us to do it. (Tr03 268-70)*

*But up till now there have been no signs of support. The classrooms are so dirty. My husband was shocked to see the classrooms. He said the secondary school classrooms were even better. They are equipped with large screens and multi-media. So the University should support. There should be some way out. But generally I'm not very positive. ... The project team are ordinary teachers and trainers. They have no ability, time, energy and funds to do it. The responsibility rests with the administrators. (Tr02 247-71)*

Lack of support from the government was mainly in funding, recruitment, certification, which therefore dampened the enthusiasm of the project team.

*It's beyond the power of the project team. It's the factors beyond our teaching. Since the time of the two sides' negotiation our identity has remained ambiguous. We are subject to the administrations of several bodies, the adult education department of the University, the British Council, which stills pays occasional visits and monitors our project and the Faculty. So the situation is very likely to occur of being unattended to in the management system. ... I feel we haven't got concern when it is needed, so it has led to the complication in our work. (Tr03 246-55)*

*The government is not willing to provide funds, neither are the other departments underneath the government. So the pressure of fees falls entirely on teachers themselves. As a consequence people are not as enthusiastic as before. (Tr01 160-164)*

*You've already had a training centre, a teacher training centre. Why didn't you put the important provincial teacher training courses in our project? They evenly allocate training to a number of institutions. The consequence is that our existing resources are not fully exploited. I'm not sure who haven't had awareness. ... I think there is a big mistake here. They have failed to fully use existing resources, e.g. the personnel and material resources in our project. So I'm not positive about the prospect of our development. (Tr01 178-96)*

*It's very difficult for the project to get authorised to put up advertisement for recruitment. We were not permitted. They didn't reject it, but they said they needed to make sure about this project, a new director. Then it was suspended for nearly one month. He/she wanted to make it clear what the project was. He/she didn't know about it because he/she hadn't been on his/her post very long. This is an example to show that it's impossible for the project to be an organisation to grant certificates in a short period of time. Because of this impossibility to award degrees, it would be very difficult to recruit many students in a short time, especially teacher trainees. (Tro4 460-71)*

*If the certification issue had been settled, it would be a big attraction. We can offer knowledge and development to the trainees, but we can't offer them a certificate which is important to them and beneficial to them. (Tr03 246-55)*

*Students are keen to learn all kinds of skills and knowledge. They also need practical degrees. This is where the biggest shame about the project. In other words, we can't award them a recognisable degree in China. Instead it has to be connected with other degree programmes or organisations, or rely on the quota from the provincial education commission, otherwise the recruitment would be almost impossible. (Tr04 447-56)*



The reasons why insufficient support had been provided, in one trainer's view, was administrators' lack of awareness of the importance of the project and the fact that the project was no longer an initiative mandated from the top.

*There may exist a common thinking that the project is finished since the British input stopped. It's now existing as a centre. It's no longer a project, but a centre. Now that there are no inputs from either side, it's entirely up to us to develop it further. I had some contact with some people in the Education Commission. ... They don't care about your proposals or programmes unless there is a directive imposed on from above. So this is very difficult. ... The difficult part is that some people at middle-ranking level who don't understand it. They wouldn't understand or support you. ... The middle-ranking administrators at all levels of organisation lack advanced awareness.... When we approached those people, our work would be stagnated. It would be impossible for us to take one step further. This is to do with their beliefs. You can't convince them at all. (Tr01 190-201)*

The second external disincentive to the longer-term sustainability of the project was the existing prevalent perception about teachers' in-service training. As one trainer observed, in-service training was seen as a privilege for elite teachers in the local context.

*(On normal training courses) teachers don't pay fees themselves, and they can get a certificate. They would welcome all kinds of training like that. Also they are offered to elite teachers. It's an honour for the course participants. They can show it to other people. They are proud of taking part in such elite teacher training courses. It's different from continuing education policy. They have benefited from that. They don't pay for their training. Of course they are very willing to come. (Tr01 212-217)*

The third external obstacle was the financial difficulties the training would pose to teachers. One trainer addressed potential financial burdens on teachers of a potential collaborative course with an overseas university.

*There would arise a barrier, financial costs. Our targets are teachers. Not many teachers can afford to go abroad for a course. If possible we would try to enlist support from the government. (Tr01 444-447)*

Measures that could be taken to enhance the project's longer-term sustainability

It was found from the interviews that in the trainers' view, the longer-term sustainability would entail two conditions being met. One was the sustained commitment of the project team, and the other was continuous support from various levels to the project.

The first dimension concerned the effort of the project team, which involved improved project management and more adaptability in their teaching and provision



of alternative teacher training programmes. A number of measures were suggested in order to ameliorate the cohesion and strength of the team. A supportive atmosphere was considered as of vital importance, which entailed tolerance, openness and democracy, team work and expansion of the team. The realisation of this environment, in a few trainers' view, largely depended on the personality and working style of a team leader.

*I think an open mind, tolerance, nevertheless, tolerance doesn't mean ignoring or defending. It means tolerating myself and others. It's empathy and understanding. (Tr01 362-65)*

*So tolerance and team work, seeking consensus while respecting differences are imperatives. (Tr01 396-397)*

*The level of integrity has much to do with the managers. In other words, the leadership is important. (Tr04 587-89)*

*In project management democracy is very important. We should be open on all issues. Teachers must be respected because they are key staff and they are experienced. We should be professional, and personal feelings shouldn't be involved. (Tr02 276-79)*

One trainer stressed the urgent need of team development through 'recruiting and training new team members as well as pursuing further professional development'.

As far as the teaching is concerned, integration of advantageous elements from traditional and western methods and adapting inappropriate western methods were regarded as a necessity to maintain the quality of teaching.

*I think education is inseparable from the society. You can't prescribe what should be done, otherwise you can't survive. You have to adapt to the changing society (needs). I think flexibility is necessary. However, the base (core) remains unchanged. (Tr04 79-81)*

*The British way is to design questionnaires or other forms. It may be more accurate, however, evaluation conducted orally might also be a method. (Tr04 364-68)*

*I attach much importance to students' daily performance, not just look at their test results as the only criterion. Also my tests don't just include what is taught. There is some flexibility. With my trainees, I consider both their daily performance and their test results. (Tr04 373-76)*

*We are better in laying solid foundations for students, and relatively weaker in applying knowledge. I don't think we should adopt British methods exclusively, instead we should combine both of our good elements. (Tr07 283-85)*

*Because ESP was not applicable in their own teaching. The majority of trainees taught general English. ESP was not relevant to their needs. (Tr07 133-37)*

*There could be more guidance for students' extracurricular activities. There were some assignments, but there could be more help and guidance. I observed that some trainees didn't*

*know how to find references. If the tutors had given more help, the trainees would have benefited more. The trainees' autonomous learning was poor. (Tr07 156-60)*

*Teacher-made syllabi due to the fact that teachers do not have the autonomy to choose their own textbooks; handouts; excessive discussions resulting in smooth progression of teaching; some teaching methods are not feasible for large classes in normal teaching situations. (Tr06)*

Alternative training programmes were considered as effective means of boosting recruitment and the project's influence. A trainer suggested short-term courses during vacations and outreach programmes. Another trainer shared this view and proposed primary school teacher training as one of the potential alternatives. One trainer thought of joint training programmes with overseas institutions. Whatever alternative programmes were to be delivered, as a number of trainers emphasised, teacher training should remain the orientation of the programme. As one trainer remarked:

*The general objective of teacher training would remain, but our operation and practice need to change to respond to the needs of our trainees. (Tr01 102-03)*

*English language teaching needs to be improved, if we can train a group of teachers, its impact would be diffused to their colleagues. The influence would be radioactive. The four-year degree programme can bring about some practical benefits to the trainees, but its impact is largely different from our original expectations. Although our current focus is on the four-year degree course, I still wish we could disseminate our impact by the teacher training courses in the summer and winter vacations. (Tr03 262-75)*

A second factor that would determine the project's future development in the trainer's view was the availability of support from diverse parties concerned. Five trainers explicitly highlighted support as a precondition for the project's longer-term sustainability. Support from these levels in forms of supportive policies, official documents with expected quota for target institutions, provision of resource materials, recognition of the team's commitment and most importantly, the value of the project were regarded as essential.

By and large, the disincentives to the project's further development were two-dimensional. The internal and external causes were responsible for the unrealised outcomes. It was indicated that the effort on the part of the grassroots and the availability of support were perceived as two main prerequisites to maximise the project's prospect of longer-term sustainability. They were considered as equally important, and the absence of either of them would jeopardise the development of the project.

## **Trainees' Perspectives about the Programme**

Investigations into teacher trainees' perspectives about the programme sought to examine perceptions of the several cohorts of trainees who participated in the programme between 1997 and 2001, including full-time trainees (1997-2001 groups from within the province where the project was based) and part-time trainees (2000-2001 groups from another two provinces who had received the training during winter and summer vacations).

Six interviews were transcribed in full. A random selection of three from each group was undertaken to ensure representativeness of samples.

## **Trainees' expectations of the programme**

Trainees' expectations of the programme comprised two elements: factors that had made them decide to come on the programme and what had made it possible for them to come, and their expectations from the programme.

The decisive factors that made the trainees' training materialise were related to intrinsic and extrinsic factors. On the one hand, the trainees, both full-time and part-time trainees were motivated to improve themselves through training on the programme. Some of them wished 'to improve their expertise in all respects', and some intended to improve their expertise in specific areas, such as 'teaching methods to improve students' English skills', and some were keen to 'update their knowledge and broaden their horizons'.

External factors were important catalysts for the trainees' training. Factors that applied to both groups of trainees involved pressures and support from their institutions and educational authorities, quality of the project team and the course, the likelihood of getting a degree. Whilst factors that mainly applied to the part-time trainees were two: exemption of entrance exam and their availability during vacations.

Pressures from trainees' institutions and educational authorities for higher degrees as well as their support were essential in trainees' decision-making.

*The principle required teachers under the age of 40 to pursue masters' degrees. (Ft02)*

*We received a notification from the educational authorities about this teacher training programme. The demands on teachers are increasingly higher. (Pt01)*

*It's necessary to get a bachelor's degree. A bachelor's degree is a must to live up to the social standards. With this purpose in mind, I came here. (Pt01)*

*We were funded and the salaries paid. Now we have a new policy, which is very liberal. If you get a degree, you will be funded 90% of the fees. (Ft01)*

The characteristics of the programme were considered as an important consideration, including the quality of the project team, the location and reputation of the university where the project was based and the project as a joint venture, high chances of getting a degree. The part-time trainees especially saw those features as important in their decision-making.

*I got to know about it through a friend of mine. ... He told me that although it was a correspondence course, it would teach us very practical things. He also told me I could get a bachelor's degree. The teachers have all been abroad, very committed and highly specialised, so I shouldn't be worried about the quality. I asked him the cost, he said 2,400 RMB per year. Also it's in the centre of this city, so it's very convenient. (Pt02)*

*First, the university is a special university. It has a good reputation. Second, it's a joint venture. At that time there were very few joint ventures. After I knew about the software and hardware aspects, I decided to come. (Pt02 T2)*

The factors that only applied to the part-time trainees were the exemption of entrance examination and their availability during vacations.

As far as trainees' expectations were concerned, it was found that in both groups there were trainees who had no clear and specific expectations, and trainees who had specific and practical expectations in their professional development and higher qualifications.

A few trainees conceded that they had no expectations before they came on the programme.

*Before I came on the course, I wasn't clear about my learning needs. I didn't know in which areas I was weak. (Ft01)*

*We are very happy to learn. We have no specific expectations. We want to keep learning, since we work in academic institutions. (Ft01)*



While some trainees had specific expectations: to obtain a degree, to be refreshed and to improve their professional competence in terms of either their English or teaching, or both of them. It is worth emphasising that some trainees had a single one expectation, and some had multiple expectations.

Higher qualifications were found to be one of the main concerns for the trainees. Some trainees saw it as a primary expectation, and some perceived it as a secondary one.

*It would be great if we could improve our English because the teachers were so good. It would benefit us. But the main one was a degree. That was my major expectation, MA. (Ft01)*

*Yes, (I expected a degree) but it was secondary. The primary one was to improve my abilities. (Pt03)*

*For me, degree is just secondary, learning is primary. (Pt02)*

To some trainees, coming on the course was an opportunity to get out of the rut and to upgrade their knowledge and expertise.

*To use an analogy, like feeling exhausted after having sports. I felt drained from being in a rut. I wanted to have a different environment. This was my first thought. The second one was that I felt I had exhausted my knowledge and expertise. I needed to charge up my batteries. I had no expectation of a degree. (Ft01)*

*I spent so much time on my teaching, not much time left for my own development. (Pt02)*

*I've been working for nine years. I wanted to charge my batteries up. (Pt02)*

Improvement of English was endorsed by some trainees as one of their major expectations, whilst improvement of teaching was not much expected due to their lack of knowledge about the specific goals of the project.

*I didn't know about such teaching methods. I just expected to improve my English proficiency and expand my range of knowledge. I didn't know the project could provide me with such teaching methods. (Ft03 T5)*

*My expectation was to improve my English and I didn't expect other aspects like teaching methods. I merely expected to improve my listening and speaking. I didn't expect the theoretical knowledge, applied linguistics or cross-cultural communication, but the course has provided me with a solid foundation for me to transfer to English teaching. (Ft03 T4)*

Some trainees aspired to improve both English proficiency and teaching.

*My main purpose was to improve my English. I felt English teachers' oral English should be at a high standard. I felt I had very limited teaching methods. The information gained about the project made me believe that it would enable me to learn some teaching methods. (Ft02 T1)*

*I expected to improve my listening. Because I wasn't an English major, I was particularly keen to improve my listening, speaking, writing and teaching methods. My students are very*

It has been shown that intrinsic motivations and external factors were perceived as important factors that had made the trainees' training materialise. On the one hand, they were keen to boost their competence through the training. On the other hand, pressures from their institutions and the educational authorities, the qualities of the programme and their practical concerns about higher qualifications were external drives for them. Particularly for the part-time trainees, examination-free admission and their availability were important considerations.

Their expectations varied from trainee to trainee irrespective of their modes of training. Some trainees expected higher degrees, some wanted to improve their English, and some sought to enhance their competence both in English and teaching, and some intended to charge up their batteries. There were also trainees who had very vague expectations of the programme.

### **Trainees' views about the impact of the project**

There arose four issues concerning trainees' views about the project impact: their perceptions of the impact the project had realised up to date, areas in which the project had failed to generate desired effect, factors that were perceived as having contributed to the realised effect and those that were considered as having hampered the project's inducing more influence.

#### **Trainees' perceptions of realised project impact**

It was found from the interviews with the trainees that the project had yielded impact on the trainees in their professional development in a variety of ways. The trainees were generally impressed and satisfied with the training experience. This endorsement was particularly high among the part-time trainees.

*Most of us are very attentive in class despite the heat. We haven't skipped one session. (Pt01)*

*My expectations have been met, and some aspects have exceeded my expectations. I'm 200% satisfied. (Pt02)*

*What I've learned here is more than I could have in two or three years elsewhere. Especially your personality, your attitudes towards students. (Pt02)*

*I will learn the teachers' commitment to their work, their manners in class. Then teaching methods. And finally good English. I like the lively classroom atmosphere. (Ft01)*

The effects the programme had produced on the trainees were firstly, their improvement of their teaching, particularly in terms of their teaching methods and techniques, abilities of exploiting textbooks, as well as triggering their reflections on their own teaching; and secondly, building up full-time trainees' confidence and leading to better career prospects.

The training, from the trainees' point of view, helped them to improve their teaching methods and techniques. This view was endorsed by both groups, especially by the full-time trainees.

Several full-time trainees expressed their appreciation of the teaching methods practised by the project team.

*The teaching methods practised by the project team were very beneficial. They have helped reduce our workload. A very important insight to me is group work. We contribute our different ideas, very helpful. My teaching has become more communicative. (Ft01 T1)*

*My use of teaching methods is much more flexible now. It is different from the traditional methods. Of course I integrate the new methods I have learned from the project. (Ft02 T1)*

*I used to be very traditional in my teaching. ... After one year's study, my teaching has been improved. My teaching methods have been greatly improved. My language skills have also been improved. I can use English exclusively now. I used to use a blend of English and Chinese. (Ft03 T2)*

*At that time I didn't understand what was task-based teaching, but now I understand it. We used to be teacher-centred. Teachers explain. Now teachers are facilitators and organizers. The techniques were very helpful.... My experience on the course has been very helpful to my teaching. It has updated my ideas in teaching. (Ft03 T3)*

*The biggest benefit from the course, I feel is that I have devolved the 'burden' to my students. Before I came here, I used traditional methods. I lectured and the students took notes. Students did what I asked them to do. After my training, this situation has been totally changed. Learning is not teachers' task, but students'. Some of my colleagues asked me why my voice was still fine after teaching four hours. Now I just briefly go through the main points, put the language points on the blackboard, I rarely talk. I ask the students to explain, to talk about the language points and main ideas of each paragraph. Then I provide them with my feedback and corrections if necessary. In this way, the students' learning is easier. (Ft03 T5)*

Part-time trainees also felt the effect of their training experience on their teaching methods. As one part-time trainee commented:

*I have learned lots of methods and techniques on your course. Although it hasn't been very long, I have already felt my improvement in speaking, pronunciation, and listening. (Pt02)*

The impact of the project on the trainees' teaching was also reflected in their ability to make use of materials, and to influence their peers and administrators, which was mentioned by some full-time trainees.

*Nobody had the courage to think of choosing their own materials and changing materials. But after the training, I have the courage to tell people why I choose a particular textbook. I talk with the administrators about our students' needs and wants. They think it's practical. And teaching designated textbooks is not suited to students' needs. We use three textbooks this year. We used to use only one textbook. My proposal was acknowledged by many colleagues. They agreed that students' needs must be taken into consideration. Materials should cater for students' needs and wants. Although we haven't done textbook writing yet, we have applied the principles of ESP in our practical teaching through our textbook selection. (Ft03 T5)*

Two full-time trainees reported that in addition to their improvement in teaching, the training experience had brought about better career prospects for them. One of them was promoted to be head of her department and the other one, who had been a secondary vocational school teacher started teaching in colleges. One of them said:

*After I went back, I started teaching College English. I have never taught it before. Now I can use English exclusively. And I can apply the methods to my teaching. I have found that my ideas were the most up-to-date among the groups when I came on some short courses. I have attempted to integrate the theories with practice. Last year at a conference on teaching methodology, two speakers from Greece and France, their ideas were very familiar to me because I had already had exposure to them on the course and I had practised many times in my classroom teaching. So I was not nervous at all when I gave a presentation. It was an opportunity to display my competence. Later I was appointed to be head of the Section of the English Language Teaching. Although English wasn't my major, although I have been teaching English for only six or seven years, my teaching methods and my teaching experience have been fully recognised by my institute. My biggest benefit is that I have become a good English teacher from an inexperienced one. I received very positive comments from the students from other classes as well. This has paved a way for my professional development. (Ft03 T4)*

Some full-time trainees felt that their confidence had been built up as a result of their training experience. Two trainees' views are evident in the following quotations:

*I feel more confident when I go into the classrooms. I feel I have the ability to tackle the problems in the classrooms. (Ft03 T2)*

*I was very shy. This course has helped me a lot. I used to be afraid of making mistakes. But now I'm not worried any more. Once I open my mouth, I can improve a lot more. I was afraid of others hearing my mistakes, but now I don't see it as a big problem. (Pt02)*

In part-time trainees' view, the programme had allowed them to reflect on their own teaching in the light of their teaching methods, affective dimension and students' skills development.



*After taking the teaching methodology course, I have realised the importance of introducing effective methods. Background information is very important. They can guess meanings of some words. .... Their efficiency would be improved. (Pt02)*

*I used to believe teachers should be strict, but now I have realised the importance of affective element. Intellectual development comes next. Students should be treated with respect and empathy. This is what I have learned and beyond my expectation. (Pt02)*

*I will be more encouraging and supportive to my students to make classroom atmosphere more lively and relaxed. I'll make them speak English more. (Pt02)*

*The teaching methodology course made me realise my reading class covers too much. I will use theories and teaching methods to improve my students' skills, not just the language contents. (Pt02)*

However, this is not to suggest that the trainees did not undergo any difficulties in coming to terms with the programme. On the contrary, both full-time and part-time trainees had experienced a process of adapting to the role of students, the English-speaking environment, and the new teaching methods.

*I had the most difficulty in getting used to it because I wasn't specialised in English. ... My listening is especially poor. So at first I was completely lost. But I'm improving gradually. My vocabulary is still too limited. But I believe I can improve through my own effort. I always consult my dictionary immediately after the class. I'm working harder than senior high school students. That's true. (Pt01)*

*At first we were not used to having no textbooks. I adapted very quickly. (Ft02 T1)*

### Trainees' views about contributing factors

It emerged from the interviews with the trainees that the quality of course delivery was considered to be a major contributing factor to the realised impact, which was ensured by human and physical elements. Human factors referred to personalities and high level of commitment of the project team; and physical ones to intrinsic physical qualities about the programme, e.g. the English environment, learner-centred communicative teaching methods, teacher-made course design and syllabi, resources and facilities, etc.

The project team was highly spoken of by the trainees. They were impressed with the team's friendliness, patience, commitment and expertise in English teaching. A few part-time trainees showed their appreciation of the team's concern about their problems and difficulties, their effort to cultivate a relaxed classroom atmosphere and their commitment.

*During the breaks some teachers asked us about our problems and difficulties. (Pt01)*

*Teachers are always patient and friendly whatever we say. They always encourage us. (Pt02)*  
*There is no pressure on me. I learn as much as I can. This is suitable for me. (Pt02)*

*They taught non-stop. That's really hard work. (Pt01)*

Full-time trainees also recognised the high quality of the project team. Several trainees were touched by the team's professional assets.

*The teachers were very friendly to everybody. They had very good personality and profound knowledge. They were very approachable. We didn't need to stand up to answer teachers' questions. I was very impressed with teachers' modesty. (Ft01 T1)*

*(One of the most impressive things) was the teachers' high level of commitment. We felt it as soon as we got there for the entrance exam. We got the result that day. They were highly efficient. (Ft01 T2)*

*I was impressed with the team. I think I have learned a lot there. I felt motivated there. (Ft02 T2)*

Interestingly, the full-time trainees perceived the extraordinary qualities of the team as being attributable, at least partly to the influence from the British cultures of teaching and learning, and their training experience in the UK.

*At first we were very shy and were afraid of speaking. The trainers, especially Steven always encouraged us to express our own opinions, whether they were right or wrong. We wrote everybody's opinions down on the board. We had a sense of achievement although we didn't speak fluently. We felt encouraged by teachers. (Ft03 T5)*

*They were all extremely committed. I think we, I mean teachers around us as well, need to learn a lot from them in this respect. Maybe because they all have been trained in the UK or they displayed the British qualities. This is necessary for teaching professionals. (Ft03 T4)*

As far as physical qualities were concerned, English environment was considered as one of the contributing factors. The trainees generally appreciated the trainers' high English standards and immersion in English environment.

*The immersion in English was very good. Sometimes I dreamed of speaking English. At times we joked with each other in English. Some expressions will stick in our mind permanently. (Ft01 T4)*

*I like the classroom atmosphere very much. Not many teachers can use English all the time. (Pt01)*

However, exclusive use of English was not without its problems. A few part-time trainees with relatively poor English proficiency suggested a necessity of occasional use of Chinese 'for explanations and better comprehension'.

A second appreciated characteristic about the quality of the programme was the teaching methods used by the project team, which was felt to be distinctive and conducive to the trainees' learning.

*The new things to me are warm-up activities in all courses. They can reduce teachers' workload. Students can guess, or teachers can provide an introduction first. This is very interesting. Students are relaxed, not afraid. Whatever they say is acceptable. (Pt02)*

*When I was a college student, our teachers lectured throughout the sessions. They read the text first, and then explained the sentences. That's very boring. But these teachers use different methods. They employ several steps, which have made our learning easier. (Pt03)*

One part-time trainee spoke highly of incorporating teaching methodology in the four language skills development modules.

*The course was very distinctive in its teaching methodology. Teaching methods were incorporated in all the language skills courses. Various methods were presented in the four language courses. (Pt01)*

Groupwork, as one of the major characteristics of the teaching methods, was recognised by two part-time trainees as effective in enabling them to 'express their different opinions' and 'make their thoughts clearer and help them with problem-solving'.

A fourth feature of the programme recognised by the trainees was course design. Two full-time trainees considered the inclusion of learner training as particularly helpful for their autonomous learning. One of them remarked:

*The course learner training was beyond my expectation. It helped me with my self-study at home given that the time in class was very limited to obtain systematic knowledge of English. (Ft03 T4)*

The course design was felt by some part-time trainees to be 'reasonable' and 'suited to their needs with different levels of difficulty in almost all of the courses'. They appreciated the teacher-made syllabi, which they thought embodied 'teachers' own styles and peculiarities'; although they acknowledged that the level of difficulty could have been reduced.

Micro-teaching and teaching practice incorporated in the programme were highlighted by a full-time trainee as helpful in making them 'realise their problems in their teaching and thus improve'. He also made a suggestion that it should have been

arranged on a regular basis throughout the course.

Materials used in the programme were seen by some trainees as useful learning materials for their 'up-to-dateness', 'authenticity', 'originality', and 'eclecticism'. Their weaknesses were also pinpointed by some part-time trainees, e.g. in the print quality of the handouts, levels of difficulty, paginations and binding.

Some full-time trainees perceived the resources and facilities as a facilitating factor in the programme. In their view, the well-equipped classroom, the movable furniture and the OHPs 'enabled them to cooperate with the trainers and to be actively involved in all kinds of activities'.

### Trainees' views about unrealised impact

Trainees' views about unrealised impact were focused on the training programme, particularly concerned with some pitfalls in course design and failure to meet diverse needs.

Full-time trainees addressed some weaknesses in the ESP component, e.g. insufficient input of content knowledge and irrelevancy of course design to their needs in normal teaching contexts.

*What I regretted about the course was business English. I've just learned a smattering of knowledge in business English. (Ft01 T4)*

*The course design is not that much needed. Current textbooks have course design incorporated. Teachers don't need to do that. (Ft01 T2)*

*After I came back, I realised that it would have been better if we had had more content knowledge. I plucked up courage to deliver the course. I know it doesn't live up to my students' expectations. I know I'm not qualified enough, but I have to carry on. I will need to learn by doing. (Ft01 T1)*

Both groups mentioned that some needs had not been met. A couple of full-time trainees considered research training and computer-assisted learning to be practical and would potentially be beneficial to their research and day-to-day teaching. While a few part-time trainees suggested 'inclusion of background knowledge about geography and history, supply of more references and self-study materials, and



delivery of second foreign language courses', which were seen as practical tools in their teaching and professional promotions.

### Trainees' views about constraining factors

It was found that trainees' views about the constraints that had hampered the project's potential comprised two kinds: obstacles to their coming on the course, and barriers to their attempts to apply the new methods in their teaching. As far as the hindrances to teachers' coming on the course were concerned, a number of reasons emerged relating to extrinsic factors, i.e. factors beyond the project. One of the extrinsic factors was concerned with the lack of institutional support, which was commonly recognised by both groups of trainees.

A few part-time trainees mentioned funding as one of the major barriers, which seemed to have been taken for granted as normal practice in their own institutions. One trainee reported that teachers had almost no opportunities of funded training, and therefore they themselves had to be responsible for the fees. This view was echoed by another two part-time trainees.

A couple of trainees assumed that the lack of opportunities of funded training was due to the low status of English teachers as compared with that of teachers of other subjects. The administrators did not perceive English teachers' in-service training as of vital importance. A few quotations are revealing concerning administrators' perceptions:

*I don't think English is equally valued as other subjects. An English class of seventy to eighty students requires a lot of time. (Pt02)*

*Teachers of other subjects teach one class, but we teach three classes. This is not fair. (Pt02)*

*We have different rates of payment. English is the lowest of the main subjects: Chinese, mathematics, physics and chemistry. And they think English teaching is easy. (Pt02)*

*My school is not concerned about teacher training. They see it as our own business. (Pt02)*

*They don't inform us of funded training programmes. On the whole English teachers' training is very limited. There are more opportunities for training in other fields, like computer, mandarin, once in every three years. (Pt02)*

This perception was resonant with that of a full-time trainee, who noted:

*My school allows you to go, but you have to pay yourself. Some institutes even don't release their teachers. It would cause lots of trouble like swapping classes with other teachers. Because shortage of staff is a common problem, if you apply personally, it would be very difficult. Teachers' status is very low. ... They don't expect us to learn and to improve. They think improving is our own business. Your improvement will be beneficial to your own future. They mainly look at your qualifications, the hardware qualities. (Ft03)*

Two concomitant consequences of the lack of support occurred: one was teachers' oscillation or reluctance to coming on a fee-paying course due to their concern about the costs; and the other one was their difficulty of affording time on account of the likely clashes of the training and their teaching, as a couple of part-time trainees acknowledged.

The second barrier to teachers' participation, in the part-time trainees' view, came from two intrinsic drawbacks of the programme, one of which was that degrees could not be guaranteed after the training, and the other one was that publicity had not been sufficient. A number of trainees were concerned about 'whether they could end up with a degree and whether the degree would be locally and nationally recognised'.

In addition to the unresolved disconcerting issue of degree, publicity was felt to be insufficient, as two part-time trainees noted, which had limited the project's reputation and influence in their regions.

The second type of constraint to the project impact was to do with hindrances to trainees' application of new methods in their home institutions. It was found that the main reason was the lack of a supportive environment in the trainees' normal teaching contexts due to the incongruence between new methods and conventional practice, pre-existing perceptions of administrators, colleagues and students, and physical constraints.

The conflict between new methods and conventional practice was derived from the exam-oriented teaching and its consequence of pressures from exams that various parties were under, ranging from administrators to students in both part-time and

full-time trainees' institutions. A number of trainees addressed the gap between exams and actual competence, two of whom said:

*We won't be able to finish the coursebooks if we apply those methods, such as group discussions. ...A lot of contents are difficult for us. Teaching is getting more difficult. If you can't finish the textbooks, you can't cope with the unified tests. (Pt01)*

*The textbooks are difficult. The exams are more difficult than textbooks. You have to expand their knowledge beyond the textbooks to prepare them for exams. (Pt02)*

There was evidence to indicate that trainees' concern about exams was compounded by a couple of factors. Students were resistant to the new teaching methods as a result of their obsession with exams and their linguistic inadequacy. Trainees' yet-to-improve English competence in handling their teaching caused skepticism from their colleagues and administrators.

*Because our students don't have an English environment. They are concerned about their exams to be upgraded to senior high schools. Their concern is to get a high mark. (Pt01)*

*In our teaching we must use one textbook. Handouts would be difficult to be implemented. This is what my institute is like.... The students were not used to my teaching methods at first which I had learned from the project. I generally did some warm-up activities. Many students were quiet. It was impossible to engage them in the communication. I make a lot of effort to make the classroom atmosphere lively. (Ft02 T1)*

*Teacher-made course design is very good, but would be unrealistic in normal contexts. Because of the existing system. Teachers are not involved in course design. My institute is relatively flexible. Some institutes are even more rigid. (Ft02 T2)*

*My teaching revolves around exams. I rarely speak English in class because my students wouldn't be able to understand difficult English. Their vocabulary is very limited. So gradually I have forgotten the vocabulary learnt at the university. (Pt01)*

*Our inspector didn't understand English teaching, so he thought we were having fun. He thought the amount of information was insufficient. If the inspector is not satisfied with your teaching, you will lose 30 points, then the remaining 70 will be in the low rank. Then you will lose your bonus. (Ft01 T4)*

*Group discussions would make the class chaotic. It would cause criticisms from some colleagues. It's hard to control the class. From the administrators. (Pt02)*

Physical constraints, as recognised by both full-time and part-time trainees, posed the difficulty of implementing new teaching methods. Large classes, unmovable furniture, constrained budgets and limited resources and facilities exacerbated the difficulties from the fore-mentioned dimensions.

*The constraints are the large classes. Sometimes I teach three classes together, more than 100 students. (Ft01 T2)*

*It's a shame that we can't apply all we have learned to our teaching. For example, pair work and group work are difficult for large classes. It's difficult to exercise control of the students.*

*Because the students are misbehaved, not very motivated. They would take it as a chance to make troubles. I think I could do it better in a small class of good students or a class of English majors. It's a pity. (Ft03 T5)*

*Firstly, the cost would be a lot. Secondly, no resource materials. Thirdly, I don't have much time to do it. (Ft01 T4)*

*It would be very difficult to use handouts in our day-to-day teaching. Even if we can get some materials, but budgets constitute a problem. We can't photocopy materials for our students. (Ft02 T1)*

To sum up, the factors perceived by the trainees to have constrained the project development were two-fold. The first was to do with intrinsic deficiencies of the project itself, namely, its nature as a non-awarding programme in the first place and insufficient effort made in publicity. The second was related to the lack of a supportive institutional environment, specifically lack of recognition and support from administrators, colleagues and students, and shortage of resources.

### Trainees' views about longer-term sustainability of the project

Trainees' perceptions about the project's longer-term sustainability involved two aspects. There arose positive signs of the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability. As observed by both groups of trainees, there has emerged a supportive environment in their institutions represented in student recognition and supportive institutional climate. They highlighted two ingredients as essential: communicating with their colleagues and administrators on the one hand, and persisting in their attempts on the other, to realise the attainment of test abilities as well as linguistic and communicative competence in students.

Trainees' perceptions concerning steps that might be taken to enhance the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability comprised efforts from two levels, i.e. the project team and the levels beyond it, including parallel departments and relevant departments above it.

The endeavours required of the project team were perceived to be provision of follow-up support, allowing for more flexibility in course delivery and settling the issue of certification. Follow-up support the trainees suggested were various forms, for example, 'supplying up-to-date information about the project', 'publishing a



journal with contributions by project participants', 'helping trainees with their practical problems in their teaching', 'setting up a website, email system or a hotline to strength communication', and 'creating an English saloon for trainees to practise speaking and exchange their ideas'. Networking around the project was the primary aspiration of the trainees.

More flexibility of course delivery was seen by both groups of trainees as necessary for more opportunities for the project's future development. A full-time trainee suggested training courses for fresh graduates with three-year diplomas; and a part-time trainee perceived secondary school teacher training as a potential opportunity; one trainee considered collaboration with overseas institutions would help to boost the recruitment and reputation of the programme.

Certification, as a recurring issue in the interviews, was felt to be a crucial consideration to be seriously dealt with by the project team. In the trainees' view, whatever kinds of training to be delivered, their attraction would be undermined without degrees assured to participants.

The perceived effort that needed to be made by the parties beyond the project team included government support and collaboration of relevant parties at parallel and higher levels with the project team on new attempts for further development. Two full-time trainees recognised the importance of recognition by relevant departments and support from them as important facilitating factors.

### **Summaries of Trainers' and Trainees' Views about the Programme**

The proceeding analyses have indicated that the trainers and trainees, from different perspectives had their respective perceptions of the programme in the light of various substantive issues on the longer-term sustainability of the project. It was found that there were both convergence and divergence on specific issues. Examining their perspectives as part of the investigation into diverse stakeholders concerned would form a meticulous and elaborate part of the jigsaw of various perceptions. Summaries of the trainers' and trainees' perceptions are provided as follows.

## **Trainers' perceptions of project goals**

There emerged a general agreement among the trainers that the project aimed to train English teachers within the province. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that confusion about the goals and divergence on the original objectives and specific changes in the foci of the project over time also existed. Perceived reasons for change in goals were external and internal, which were considered to interplay with each other. The external ones were concerned with lack of support from educational authorities and change of trainees' backgrounds and expectations; and the internal ones were related to unsettled problem of accreditation and low recruitment. Opposing views emerged on the effect of the change in goals. A positive view saw it as appropriate and conducive to the project's further development; whilst a negative opinion considered it as inappropriate and would potentially jeopardise the destiny of the project.

## **Trainers' and trainees' expectations**

The trainers had two main expectations: improving their English proficiency and teaching, which were expected to be fulfilled through overseas training in applied linguistics for ELT, working with British colleagues and the project team, and exploiting the project facilities and resources.

It was found that, despite variations in expectations, the trainees had extrinsic and intrinsic motivations in participating in the perceived high-profile project. Their expectation of enhancing their professional competence existed alongside external pressures from their institutions and educational authorities and their concern about higher qualifications.

## **Trainers' and trainees' views about project impact**

Four dimensions were identified concerning trainers' and trainees' views about the project impact: realised impacts achieved thus far, unrealised impacts, contributing and inhibitive factors.

The areas of achieved project impacts, in the trainers' view, were manifested in the trainees, trainers, project development, faculty and university development. Personal development of both trainers and trainees and institutional development were ostensible from the interviews.

The perceived impacts by the trainees were mainly on their professional development in a variety of aspects after a process of acclimatisation. Teaching methods were felt by both full-time and part-time trainees to be very distinctive and effective. The training experience, as noted by some full-time trainees, had built up their confidence and brought about better career prospects for them. While the part-time trainees perceived the project as a trigger of their reflections on their teaching in terms of their teaching methods, affective dimensions and skills development in their teaching.

Contributing factors perceived by the trainers were four-dimensional: resources, the sustained effort on the part of the project team, trainees' enthusiasm in learning and communication between the project and relevant departments vertically and horizontally.

From the trainees' point of view, the quality of course delivery was a major contributing factor, which involved a multiplicity of qualities about the courses: the supportive and committed project team, the up-to-date resources, advanced teaching methods, relaxed English environment and relevant course design.

The unrealised project impacts, in the trainers' view, were the absence of breakthrough in recruitment, unsettled accreditation and failure to generate deeper and wider impact than it had so far achieved. While the trainees' views about unrealised project impacts were mainly concerned with the training programme, particularly some limitations in course design and failure to fulfil various needs.

Constraining factors, in the view of the trainers, were internal and external, which respectively concerned various impediments. The internal dimension was to do with

financial difficulties, management problems, failure to account for institutional contexts in undertaking recruitment, and burnout of the team; and the external one was related to the dissatisfying recruitment and unresolved certification.

Trainees' perceptions of constraining factors referred to obstacles that trainees encountered in coming on the programme on the one hand, and barriers to their innovative attempts in their own teaching contexts on the other. Lack of institutional support was perceived by both groups of trainees as one of the major disincentives. Besides, the nature of the programme originally as a non-award bearing programme as well as insufficient publicity were also perceived as causes of the project's underachievement.

As far as the hindrances to trainees' application of new methods in their own institutions are concerned, lack of support was considered to be an essential factor, which involved resistance from administrators, colleagues and students due to its tension with existing conventional practice and its demands on resources.

### **Trainers' and trainees' views about the project's longer-term sustainability**

Trainers' perceptions of the longer-term sustainability were two-faceted: barriers to ensuring its longer-term sustainability and measures that could be taken to enhance its longer-term sustainability. Two dimensions of barriers were identified, which were specifically obstructions for the dissemination of the project ideas and the sustainability of the project base. The first type of barrier came from lack of a supportive environment in which for the trainees to apply new ideas. The second type resulted from internal (e.g. pitfalls in teaching and management) and external dimensions (e.g. prevalent social perceptions of INSET, teachers' personal concerns and lack of support).



In the trainers' view, the longer-term sustainability would depend on the tenacious effort on the part of the project team and the availability of continuous support to the project from various levels.

Trainees' views about the project's longer-term sustainability highlighted the effort to be made by the project team and relevant departments at both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The effort of the project team, in the trainees' view, entailed on-going follow-up support and provision of alternative award-bearing programmes. External support from various levels was considered as a *sine qua non* in achieving sustainability.

The next chapter is focused on perspectives of the other three groups of stakeholders about the programme, i.e. the expatriates who had been involved in the project, administrators in the university at the Faculty level and the University level, and administrators in the target AEIs.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Perspectives of Project A Expatriates and Administrators about the Programme**

This chapter concerns perspectives of three groups of stakeholders in Project A about the programme involving expatriate counterparts, administrators at faculty and university levels in the university where the project was based (university administrators), and administrators in the target adult education institutions (AEI administrators). Their perceptions, like those of the trainers and trainees which have been discussed in the previous chapter are intended to be illuminating as to a number of substantive issues concerning the programme's longer-term sustainability viewed from different perspectives.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section concerns analyses of expatriates' views about major issues concerned with the goals of the project, the impacts that the project has realised and has failed to achieve, its prospect for longer-term sustainability. The second and third sections look at the perspective of university administrators and AEI administrators. Finally, summaries are presented of salient issues that arise from the three groups' perspectives concerning the project's longer-term sustainability.

#### **Expatriates' Perspective about the Programme**

Expatriates' perceptions of the project's longer-term sustainability addressed four dimensions of issues. Their views were examined about the project goals and changes in goals, the areas of achieved impact and unachieved impact, contributing and constraining forces, and their opinions about the prospect of the project's sustainability.

## **Expatriates' perceptions of project goals**

Expatriates' views about the goals of the project covered their perceptions about the original goals and changes in goals, and their views on the effect of those changes.

There emerged an agreement among the expatriates that the project sought to 'generate economic growth within the province' through 'training teachers from AEIs in that province in language competence, ESP and general teaching methodology'. It was envisaged that the project aimed to help teachers from those institutions 'to start to do staff development in their own institutions upon their return'. It was noteworthy that one expatriate highlighted trainer training as the second goal. In his view, the project aimed to 'help a group of lecturers in the university where the project was based to hone their academic and professional skills'.

The rationales for the selection of the university as a project base, from the three expatriates' perspective were associated with a match between British sponsors' intention of 'setting up a vocational project with a base in a provincial university and a provincial education commission' on the one hand, and the status of the university as a leading provincial university with attachment to the provincial educational commission on the other.

There arose slight discrepancies on the foci of the training programme. One view regarded ESP training as a focus; the second considered language competence, general methodology and ESP methodology as three parallel components; and the third proposed an additional focus to the second, 'to raise a general awareness of teachers to different approaches for different kinds of students' and 'to use different aspects of teaching and to have a repertoire of methodologies or approaches that teachers could use to satisfy students' needs'. The latter two views were more specific than the first.

There emerged variations in the expatriates' views about the changes in goals and the

effect of those changes. One was of the opinion that 'the project framework remained the same' despite the low enrolment. The second reported that two changes had occurred: 'the link of the project, which had originally meant to be a non-award-bearing programme with an MA programme introduced from early on and development of outreach activity late in the project'.

The reasons for changes in goals, in one expatriate's view, was low enrolment, which turned out to be 'opposite to the positive prospects indicated in the feasibility study'. Two further factors were identified by another expatriate. He attributed the changes and even the dissatisfying enrolment partly to poor communication between the two governments and mismatch between imported ideas and the local context.

*I think that notion soon proved to be mistaken or unfeasible because it was just impossible to attract enough participants to the programme who match that description right through the beginning. It soon turned out that there was no memorandum of the agreement with the Ministry of Justice at the national level. So when they were reapproached and asked to cooperate with this programme, they said what programme, we know nothing about it. So there was some of the homework not being done by the British government in that respect. ... Although, I think even if those kinds of problems hadn't been there, it would still have been very difficult to sustain because of the same reasons that it may be difficult for the original concepts that could be implemented at the university base. (Ex01 74-9)*

The effect of both changes was felt to have caused confusion among the trainees and staff about aims. One expatriate looked at the changes from the British sponsors' point of view and saw it as 'disastrous' because 'it had led to them withdrawing funding earlier from the programme'.

As a corollary, from the expatriates' point of view, the project originally intended to generate economic prosperity in that province through enhancing the professional expertise of AEI teachers particularly in the areas of language competence, general teaching methodology, and ESP methodology. The occurrence of changes in goals was considered as a result of enrolment deficiency, poor communication between two sponsors and the gulf between the introduced ideas and local milieu. The effect of the changes was considered to be negative, leading to confusion about project goals and an earlier discontinuity of the project.



## Expatriates' perceptions of project impact

Similar to the trainers' and trainees' perceptions of the project impact, the expatriates' views were classified into four dimensions concerned with realised and unrealised impact the project had produced so far, facilitating and inhibitive factors.

### *Realised impact*

It was found that the impact the project had achieved was in four areas: project development, the teacher trainees who participated in the project, the Faculty and the University, and the overseas collaborating institution.

The project development was highly endorsed as one of the major areas of impact. The project's influence was manifested in the success of the course delivery and project management. As far as the course delivery was concerned, there was much evidence to indicate 'the high quality and relevance' of the course as a solid programme in various aspects, which 'had received very positive feedback from the trainees all the way through'. Three expatriates were very impressed with the course design, two of whom spoke highly of the high degree of integration of language with teaching methodology through the strategy of gradual transition of the focus from language development to teaching methodology.

*The overall structure of the programme moving from language development involving covert methodology because during that language development sessions you were doing things which were different methodologically from they were accustomed to doing in their own teaching or in their previous learning experiences, and then being able to build further on that in the second term by focusing more direct on methodology. (Ex01 300-351)*

Teaching practice, as one of the important elements in the course delivery, received unanimous recognition by the three expatriates. It was seen as a distinctive feature different from normal training programmes 'with its focus on up-to-date ideas about language teaching methods' and had provided the trainees with an opportunity 'to try to implement some of what they had seen or learned or come across on the course'.

Additionally, two more features were considered as effective. One expatriate noted that harmonious collaborative relationships had been strongly developed between

tutors, and between tutors and students on the project. Another expatriate recognised the composition of dissertation with practical application as impressive.

The perceived impact on project development was apparent in resources development both in human and physical resources, and collaboration and team work. The staff development through an internal staff development programme and a considerable period of working experience on the project was generally perceived to be an immediate impact on the development of human resources. One expatriate commented on the staff development programme as 'very relevant and valuable' because it was 'process-oriented with the provision of a variety of topics chosen based on negotiation and was down-to-earth involving a lot of learning by doing'. It was considered as one of the contributing factors to the project team's 'acquisition of an enormous amount of knowledge and a wide range of skills in teaching and teacher training'.

Teamwork and collaboration, in the three expatriates' view, was another aspect of impact on project human resources development. The three expatriates were impressed with a series of responsibilities assumed by the project team concerned with publicity and marketing. One of them particularly appreciated 'the spirit of collaboration among staff between the British and the Chinese'. One was impressed with the impact of developing one team member into a project manager, who 'had got an ability to plan and run a short course'.

In terms of physical resources development, the resources centre and self-access were generally acknowledged as major areas of impact. In one expatriate's view, the self-access centre 'had got student teachers to understand the value of self-access by means of trying to focus the self-access on what they taught for the integration of the link and getting the student teachers to be aware of that link'.

A second area of impact was perceived to be on the teacher trainees. One expatriate had the impression that the training seemed to have generated 'a significant and enduring effect' on trainees' teaching. A compelling tangible instance of trainees'

change in teaching observed by two expatriates was use of English as a medium of instruction. One of them cited an example of the experience of a teacher, who 'spoke English for the whole class during the teaching practice, although she had never spoken English in her classroom for fifteen years'. Positive attitudes were revealed in the following comments made by another expatriate, who perceived it as 'a realistic change to remedy the weaknesses without destroying the foundation of teaching methods which had many strengths'.

*That seems like a simple thing in a way, but I think it was clearly a significant change for many of the teachers and especially for the students because even the methodology didn't change all that much, the learning opportunities were greatly increased once English was being used as the medium of instruction. Because the teacher could continue to use the same basic materials which he or she would have really no choice about anyway, but hopefully make it less teacher-centred, less boring, provide more reinforcement, more opportunities to learning again. But within a framework that isn't going to be so different and strange and new that students and teachers can't cope with it. (Ex01 300-351)*

The effect on the trainees was recognised in raising their awareness of the need for change in their own teaching as a result of increased learning opportunities. Two expatriates acknowledged the trainees' realisation of the need for them to manage change and had started to be more reflective as a result of their training. One expatriate remarked:

*I remember also some of them said that it wasn't the amount of the methods. It was the way of thinking about teaching that had been most significant thing for them in terms of their learning as a result of the programme. It made them think about their teaching, not just doing it in an automatic or a routine way.... But I remember now very well that several of them expressed that point of view. And I think that's many ways in fact, that's the most important thing of all because it's not so much the repertoire of techniques. It's what that stimulates in terms of teacher thinking. That is a really important thing about teacher development and teacher education programme... They have become more aware of what they are doing, hopefully, in a better position to evaluate different ideas that people present to them and all that kind of thing to increase their awareness as teachers. (Ex01 481-95)*

A third perceived area in which the project had made impact was the development of the University and the Faculty. A consensus emerged that the project had contributed to the profile of the University, the development of human resources in the Faculty and the University as well as the team members' personal professional development.

A fourth area of impact, as pinpointed by one expatriate, was in the overseas collaborative institution involved in the programme to provide the team with postgraduate training. He noted that the training experience had helped enhance mutual understanding and communication between the two sides and might create

potential opportunities for further collaborations.

*The impact is the effect on the people like myself and other colleagues who were involved in it because we. I mean I've never been to China before, and so for me, learning about China as well as learning about the project was enormously beneficial. And other colleagues who were involved less directly still also benefited. I'm sure the colleagues here in this department by having yourselves together, members of the team on the MA programme here. It also added to their knowledge as well. ...Who knows what may happen in the future, and I mean we all hope there can be continued professional dialogue indeed. We are having that right now. (Ex01 390-473)*

It was noteworthy that, from two expatriates' point of view, that unintended impact had occurred in a number of ways. The first unanticipated impact was, as one expatriate highlighted, the establishment of an IELTS (International English Test System) testing centre in the University, which would help to boost the reputation of the University. The second unintended impact identified by the same expatriate was the realisation of the necessity of personnel training in the field of marketing, which had proved to be much needed for the project recruitment. The third, which was identified by the second expatriate, was the project leading to the research being undertaken by one of the project team members into the project as 'another form of sustainability and a form of continued life of the project'. The fourth, in the second expatriate's view, was 'the realisation of lots of other impact, all of which was not exactly as had been intended'. The essential one perceived by him/her was the project leading to a critical examination of project approach adopted for this project in particular and change strategies in general.

*It turned out to be, just unrealistic in terms of what, you know, it was supposed to be the primary technical focus of the project, but interestingly the other sides of the project turned out to be very worthwhile anyway. (Ex01 390-473)*

*Projects like this have enormous potential interest to education in general because they involve the use of certain kinds of strategies to try to bring about change in education. (Ex01 821-26)*

In sum, in the expatriates' view, the project had generated two kinds of impact. One was envisaged and intended from the outset and all the way through the project implementation, comprising four areas concerned with impact on the project development, on the trainees, development of the Faculty and the University the project was attached to and the overseas collaborating institution. The other was unintended and unanticipated, involving the increased reputation of the University with the establishment of an IELTS testing centre, awareness of the need for training



in marketing in addition to that in ELT and teacher training for the project team, bringing about reflections on project approach, and a research project being conducted by one of the team members.

### *Contributing factors*

Three factors emerged with regard to the expatriates' perceptions of factors that had contributed to the project producing the impact in the areas presented in the previous section. The first factor concerned the initiatives and contributions made by the project team. First of all, the role of leadership at the team level was considered by two expatriates as of vital importance. Additionally, the effort made by the team members was unanimously perceived as having played an important part. One expatriate was impressed with the potential of the language-oriented project team in teacher training, which was facilitated by their experience of training and being trained on the project.

*I think it's also to do with the quality of the people that were involved in your department in that work. They must have already had good ability in that direction to be able to bridge that gap. ...I think also because a lot of responsibility was given to the Chinese counterparts quite early on as well, more than I would have thought possible given my understanding of the backgrounds of the counterparts of that stage which has been mostly language teaching work, and not really teacher training work. But of course the early part of the project teacher training programme was to a large extent language development work anyway, so in that sense I suppose that was a good way in having done that and move on to more methodology-oriented training in the second term. You know that experience of the first term would make that more possible to take up. (Ex01 216-28)*

The second expatriate emphasised the role of the team's training abroad and 'adapting the theoretical aspects to what they knew'. He/she was appreciative about the team's effort and achievement displayed in marketing for the recruitment. The third expatriate attributed the realised impact to good teamwork and collaboration at the team level.

The second perceived contributing factor was, as noted by one expatriate, liaison at the university level. He/she considered the role as 'productive' to link between the project and other parties concerned, which entailed 'the good ability to understand the Chinese and British points of view'.

The third facilitating factor, in one expatriate's view, was provision of support to the project staff development in the form of UK-based training. He/she considered the training as relevant to the team members' needs, which allowed the team to apply necessary training skills to put the knowledge acquired from the training into practice. In the meantime he/she acknowledged that it was partly to do with the effect of internal project staff development programme on the team's capacity development.

In short, three factors were felt to have made an important part in the project process. The effort made by the team was seen as essential consisting of the role of the leadership at the team level and the initiatives made by the team members. The coordination mediated at the university level was also viewed as a catalyst in promoting communication between the project and relevant parties involved. The third factor was the availability of support to the team's staff development through internal and overseas training to acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical experience relevant to their work.

### *Unrealised impact*

It was found that, in the expatriates' view, the project impact was still limited in its depth and breadth. The first example, as noted by two expatriates, was the existence of a gap between the desired effect and the actual achievement of the project. One of them commented that 'some ideas and practices, for example, western notion and practices of ESP could not be put into practice in some institutions due to cultural differences in perceptions' and 'the lack of institutional support and opportunities to put the ideas into practice'.

The second example of the underachievement of the project was provided by another expatriate, who noted the failure to develop the project into a more influential teacher training project.

*It would have been a lot more beneficial maybe for the University to start an outreach project, maybe to publish articles on what could be done in developing institutions in China, and sort of becoming well-known in developing teachers, aiding teachers, that was a teacher training project. (Ex03 208-14)*

The third example, as mentioned by the third expatriate, was the abortion of one branch of the project on ELP (English for legal purposes) based in another university at the inception of the project, Project C, which will be discussed in Chapter 8.

The fourth example, according to one expatriate, was the trainees' failure to acquire expertise in ESP course design. He/she predicted that 'it would be extremely tough for the trainees to start their own syllabus design straightaway on return to their own institutions'.

Besides the failure to attain these goals, the project enrolment and publicity were considered by two expatriates as unsuccessful, which in turn had constrained the generation of the project impact and had led to the failure to achieve the three proceeding goals.

The fifth example was pinpointed by two expatriates, who maintained that the project had failed to provide adequate follow-up support to those institutions. One of them remarked:

*There are an awful lot of institutions in the province who still have English language teachers who struggle through classes, who use out-of-date materials, who have limited resources. And if you did give both teachers some support, some training, it doesn't have to be training, you know, a network, kinds of meet, one lecture, give them some ideas so that they can design best materials for their students. Maybe, you know, be able to know where to go on the internet or where to go in terms of teaching resources now, how to use the new teaching resources. (Ex03 387-95)*

In brief, the perceived unrealised impact consisted in a gap between the original goals and the performance and achievement of the project. In the expatriates' view, the project's potential in teacher training had been inhibited by its poor recruitment, which in turn had caused its inability to provide sufficient follow-up support to target institutions.

### *Constraining factors*

There emerged five major constrains, from the expatriates' point of view, that had hampered the project development. Recruitment and publicity were the most tangible factors. The other four were related to inappropriate assumptions and methodology

inherent in the project approach, confusion about goals, pitfalls in project management and poor coordination of various parties.

The first disincentive, in the view of the three expatriates, was recruitment and publicity. One of them attributed it partly to 'change in national policy making MA necessary for AEI teachers'. Another one felt that the project would have made a huge impact if the recruitment and marketing had gone as expected.

The second constraint, in two expatriates' view, stemmed from a gap between the expectations of project funders and the characteristics of the local contexts. The supply of the programme had proved to be irrelevant to the local demands. One expatriate, acknowledging the programme as 'great and robust with many excellent features', pointed out that it had not fulfilled the local needs due to intrinsic problems with the 'hard systems approach':

*The project is all based on the idea that you can sit down and sort of in advance on paper work out everything is going to happen in the complex of educational enterprise for the next four years. So what happens in practices, either those objectives are met but at the expense of ignoring many important things, or other things like that, or than not and people get guilty and worried and get criticised and so on and often they put up a show of having met the objectives in order to keep the British Council and people like that happy. (Ex01 575-635)*

*The problem that occurred was that it wasn't possible to attract so many or even very many of the trainees that were originally intended and in certain respects might be even easier if the whole programme had just become a more general one in the sense of doing the same sort of thing but in a more general way. ... I'm sure for most trainees. It would have been easier and more straightforward, I think to put into practice to see the relevance of them. The same in the second semester, you know more general principles of courses in fact more work on methodology probably. The course design stuff most teachers don't really need it. Most of the trainees in fact I don't think were in a position to design their courses at all, whereas they did need help as much as possible in the development of their methodology. I think the rationalisation in an ideal world could have taken place in the later years of the project whereby some of the course design could have been done away with and created more time for methodology and teaching practice because I think that was a more relevant need for most of the teachers. (Ex01 278-298)*

He/she had an impression that 'the support that had been given by the British government was a bit too hedged and full of all sorts of impossible conditions and intentions' and that 'there was great resistance to the notion of ESP in some educational institutions due to its inconformity to the conventional practices of focusing on subject knowledge on the one hand, and trainees' lack of experience in syllabus design on the other'. This view was echoed by another expatriate.



*The trainee teachers were just overall, they were not ready for designing syllabuses, not the designing syllabuses is difficult, but I think some of the trainees on the course were either very new to teaching or had only a few, maybe one year teaching experience any one or two teachers. You can't expect them to design the course, design the syllabus. Some of them even never taught. (Ex03 299-303)*

The third expatriate shared the same view with these two. He/she noted:

*We needed to develop further the concept of appropriate methodology for adult education institutions. We needed to work more on materials appropriate to that particular Chinese context. A basic problem was, I think, different perceptions of what project meant. And at a more down-to-earth level there was on both the British side and the Chinese teacher side a tendency to think that ideas from communicative language teaching could just be applied raw to the Chinese context. (Ex02 41-48)*

Confusion about project goals was pinpointed by two expatriates as a third constraining factor. One of them felt that the lack of agreement on project goals by various levels had made the collaboration difficult. In his/her view, the University did not seem to have clear objectives. The trainees did not have much information about the nature of the programme and the degree of its relevance to their needs.

*One of the main reasons why lots of them came on the course was for their language improvement. I mean without a doubt. I think the way the course was advertised no one really knew, but we were really trying to help them design syllabuses. I can remember some of the students when we gave them the course introductions, when we all went into one room, we all spoke a little bit about our courses, and we did that presentation to them. I can remember some students asked what was course design. They came to study the language. (Ex03 288-95)*

The fourth impediment, as one expatriate noted, was to do with the poor communications and coordination between various parties and lack of support to the project team. Poor communication, in his/her view, had occurred between the project and the levels above it, i.e. educational authorities and the University. He/she also observed that financial support to teacher trainees was lacking:

*I think the model of the recruitment was that the educational authorities and the University were going to help to recruit students or student teachers. How this was going to be achieved, I'm not sure, but I suppose one of the aspects was that part of the project funds was going to be used to sponsor students, student teachers to study on the programme. And I'm not sure whether that had happened because I think most of the students on the programme were fee-paying, privately funded students, whereas maybe one idea, maybe this was later change, I don't know, was to have government sponsor trainees on the programme. And I think that would have solved the recruitment problem if the provincial government had actually made an allowance where there was full course fee or maybe half of scholarship. (Ex03 407-22)*

Another expatriate also highlighted this problem in his remarks:

*But clearly the chain of command was a very long and complicated one between the project training programme and the provincial education commission and then the adult education*

*institutes. You know getting that kind of cooperation and understanding, and then of course the financial resources to enable the trainees to turn up for the programme proved to be very difficult. (Ex01 512-19)*

The consequence of this, as he/she noted, was 'the great pressure the team had been under to go out to recruit non-existent students with minimal external support'.

The fifth and final hindrance, as identified by one expatriate, was from the project team itself. Management problems resulting from cultural differences were perceived to have inhibited the project implementation, involving difficulties of 'planning and carrying out team work' with his Chinese colleagues. He/she also noted that his sense of humour had to be modified in the process of communication.

*I think it was difficult to actually bring people together. I think the individuals themselves were very individualistic. They were like islands, often very strong characters, professionally and individually. And therefore very difficult to actually collaborate with the team. ... They were always a bit suspicious of working in a team because they have been so independent. They have always done their jobs themselves. (Ex03 533-48)*

*I don't think local organisations, Chinese organisations also like to plan, but I don't think with the same enthusiasm, definitely not. Maybe the plan was more short-term. ... I mean humour as well. I definitely modified my sense of humour because often my sense of humour was just not appropriate. (Ex03 525-29)*

To sum up, in the expatriates' view, five factors had constrained the project's potential of producing more impact. The first and most apparent one was recruitment and publicity. The other four were culturally inappropriate assumptions and methodology inherent in the project approach, confusion about goals among various parties, poor communications and coordination between those parties and unavailability of support to the project and AEI teachers, and pitfalls in project management.

### **Expatriates' perceptions of the project's longer-term sustainability**

There emerged a positive attitude towards the project's longer-term sustainability. As two expatriates noted, the project was perceived to 'stand distinct possibilities for sustainability' on the assumption that 'the basic things had been sustained'. In the meantime, in the expatriates' view, the project's sustainability might be enhanced if a number of conditions were met.

One of the essential conditions, as was identified by one expatriate, consisted in the local participants' initiatives to 'establish a further reputation as a centre of thinking and research about ELT in the province'.

*I suppose ultimately everybody has come out ahead. The better off of the project has not taken place. You know in an ideal world it wouldn't have to pay that price. There would be more sustained, self-sustaining type of activity coming from the inside. That, you know, would gradually build up the means by which the universities and other parts of the carry out the sort of activity. You know they rely on themselves and on their own governments and so on primarily. (Ex01 760-731)*

Adaptability, as another prerequisite, was highly endorsed by the three expatriates. Accreditation, as one form of 'adaptation to new realities', was commonly recognised as a crucial issue to be addressed. The three expatriates suggested an integration of the programme with a degree course, whether a masters' degree course or a first degree course depending on the situation of enrolment. One expatriate emphasised the importance of its integration with the normal programmes in the University.

*There should be a rationalisation and for all I know happening behind all this anyway of the relationship between that training programme and the MA programme that you have in the department. .... I would hope that it would happen properly if it hasn't already in the future because in that way the role of the training programme becomes more close aligned with the MA programme, and therefore more closely integrated with the normal sort of programmes of the university rather this odd thing, but was brought in from another planet somewhere, being down into the middle of the university from a foreign place. And then, you know, the foreigners bugged off and washed their hands off it, not a nice thing. And I think that is, to my mind, the most important aspect of it in terms of the prospects of its longer-term sustainability. ... I think that is really the crucial thing in the longer term. The more training programme can become integrated with the normal educational system, then that's the key. If it's external to the system, it will die out. It can't survive. So as long as it's part of the system. (Ex01 653-680)*

Alternative training programmes, as another form of adaptation, was perceived as a potential route. Two expatriates suggested outreach programmes and distance learning as potential opportunities to be exploited. The third expatriate considered it as a potential means of enhancing its sustainability 'for the team to take initiative to conduct research specifically on the programme and research in ELT and teacher training in general given the inadequacy and need for research in these two fields in China'. He/she also acknowledged difficulties that would arise due to 'a general lack of financial support from the government to research'. As a result, support in various forms was highlighted as a facilitating drive to make these ideas implemented. One expatriate attached importance to creation of a supportive climate in general terms.

The other emphasised the importance of support from the University and from the local government to the project, and government support to teachers in financial terms.

Therefore, the project's longer-term sustainability, in the expatriates' view, would depend on the exertion of the local participants' autonomy, which would entail two requirements being fulfilled: the grassroots' initiative in undertaking research in the fields of ELT and teacher training together with provision of alternative programmes well aligned with existing normal degree programmes on the one hand, and the availability of support at meso and macro levels to the project and AEI teachers on the other. The next section concerns perspectives of administrators in the Faculty and the University that had commissioned faculty members to work on the project as trainers.

### **Perspectives of University Administrators in Project A about the Programme**

Administrators' views about the programme were concerned with three issues concerning the project's prospect of longer-term sustainability: the goals of the project, the impact the project had generated and had failed to achieve so far, and the project's longer-term sustainability.

#### **University administrators' views about project goals**

Despite the commonality in the two administrators' perception of the project goal as teacher training, one perception was more specific than the other. One held a vague view that the project had sought to 'upgrade teacher beliefs and teaching methods, and improve English proficiency'. The other one was more specific, maintaining that 'the project had aimed to commission a middle-ranking provincial university to train English teachers from adult education institutions both at secondary and tertiary levels in the province as primary targets in their English language teaching, and English-related professionals as secondary targets'. In his/her opinion the provincial government was not very clear about the aims of the project from the outset.



*The project goals were initially defined as early as in 1994. At that time the British funders were targeting a province in the mainland of China, a middle-ranking university to initiate an adult education training project. ... The provincial education commission was commissioned and it was not clear about the details of the project. A project was to be set up in a certain region of China to develop adult education in ELT training. The base was intended to start central China and its impact was expected to radiate to its neighbouring provinces. Its impact was expected to be social-wise and academic-wise. ... This project was the 15<sup>th</sup> one between the two governments focused on adult education, targeting those English teachers in adult education institution at secondary level and tertiary level who had no higher education experience or who had no time or no opportunities to receive formal education in tertiary education institutions. (A01)*

## **University administrators' perceptions of project impact**

Administrators' views about the project impact covered four dimensions concerned with realised and unrealised impact, contributing and constraining factors.

The impact the project had achieved, as one administrator noted, was both 'social and financial'. The social effect, in his/her view, the project had produced considerable influence of the University, the Faculty and the project team both at home and overseas. In the view of both administrators, the project 'had helped boost the reputation of the University and the Faculty, and enhanced the team development'. Both of them recognised the project's effect on team members' skilful manipulation of a repertoire of teaching methods and techniques. One of them highlighted the project's contribution to the team members' attainment of higher qualifications as beneficial to teachers' personal development and the profile of the Faculty. The financial effect referred to the income generated from the part-time training courses beyond the province.

Factors that were perceived to have contributed to the project development were multiple. In the view of one administrator, two elements were essential: the effort of the project team and support from various levels of parties concerned, including the two governments, the provincial educational authorities, the University and the Faculty. The other administrator highlighted western ideas concerned with teaching and management as contributing forces in the following quote.

*First, its teaching ideas are advanced. ... The teaching is based on the needs of the target trainees. Secondly, they have a strict management system. For example, the selection of target trainees was very strict. This is very different from our ways, but it is necessary sometimes. ... Thirdly, there is a big humanistic element in their teaching. It means teaching*

*is based on the needs of students, involving teachers and courses to suit their needs to motivate learners. A course that loses sight of learners' needs and motivations can't be effective. Efforts should be made to maximise their motivations and initiatives. This is what we lack in many institutions. (A01)*

Unrealised impact, from the point of view of one administrator, was 'its limit in its breadth of influence as a training centre'. The other administrator considered that 'the project's exchange of information with the outside world was still limited'.

Constraining factors, in the two administrators' view, were internal and external. Internal factors were concerned with intrinsic drawbacks of the project. External factors involved a multiplicity of sources: the lack of flexibility of the British side as to issues of accreditation and recruitment, lack of recognition and support to the project from diverse dimensions, and severe competition the project was confronted with.

Internal drawbacks of the project itself were identified by one administrator, which included localisation of the project and financial difficulties. In his/her view, localisation based on consideration of the Chinese context had led to the project being reduced to a local-level project and its influence being undermined. Constrained budget had posed considerable pressure on the project team. Shortage of staff was also considered as a hindrance for the project development.

External factors stemmed from three directions. The first direction, in the view of one administrator, was lack of flexibility of the British side on the issues of accreditation and recruitment target which 'had considerably affected cooperation between the two sides'. As the two administrators noted, there existed tensions between two notions of lifelong learning and adult education derived from differing cultural contexts. One of them perceived losing sight of characteristics of the local context and sticking to the original goal of non-award-bearing training to be a disincentive to the project enrolment.

The second perceived direction of external factors was lack of recognition and support from various parties concerned. One administrator mentioned that 'there had

been no supportive policy issued by the educational authorities to recognise teachers' training experience on the project', which alongside administrators' practical concerns had led to institutions' reluctance to send their teachers on the project'. He/she considered financial support from local government and the University as insufficient especially towards the end of the project due to the lack of awareness of the role of the project on the part of the Faculty and the University. The Faculty's perception of the project as a cash-cow was felt to be an inhibitive force given the already existing financial difficulties.

The third external factor, as identified by one administrator was harsh competition in recruitment the project had encountered as a result of proliferation of award-bearing training programmes.

In brief, the constraints for the project development, in the two administrators' view, derived from internal and external sources. Internally, the project assumed great pressure caused by limited financial resources and shortage of staff. Localisation was considered by one administrator to have constrained the project impact.

Externally, the project was faced with a series of difficulties, e.g. the suspended issue of accreditation and restrictions on recruitment due to the inflexibility of the British side, lack of recognition and support from diverse levels to both the project and AEI teachers, and highly competitive educational markets.

### **University administrators' perception of the project's longer-term sustainability**

Two contrasting attitudes emerged towards the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability. One view was optimistic that the existence of a favourable climate where the increasing popularity of learner-centred language teaching and of the concept of lifelong learning would contribute to the project's recruitment and in turn the project's further development. The pessimistic view was concerned with the burnout of the project team, the chronic problem of poor recruitment and the devaluation of adult education and vocational training by the society at large.

From the two administrators' point of view, the project's longer-term sustainability was predicated upon the project effort on the one hand, and external support on the other. One administrator emphasised the endeavours made by the project team as of vital importance and suggested three measures to be taken. The first was to adapt to social needs in the educational markets both within and beyond the province, which entailed increased efforts on publicity.

The second step he/she suggested was to exploit existing advantages and to develop alternative programmes. In his/her view, teacher training would be the main orientation targeted to wider audience including teachers from various levels of institutions, which would alleviate the problem of recruitment. Online learning was considered to be one of the potential methods of course delivery. Accreditation was emphasised as a must for all kinds of training programmes. Exploiting existing strengths, in his/her view, also included attempts 'to undertake research on a range of issues, e.g. teaching methodology, linguistics and cross-cultural communications'.

The third step in his/her proposal was to strengthen team development, which was echoed by the other administrator. Expansion of the team by recruiting new members and maintaining the enthusiasm and morale of the team through better financial rewards were considered as of vital importance. Additionally physical resources needed to be upgraded.

External support was highlighted as important in facilitating the project's development. Both administrators emphasised the need for a general supportive environment and support from the educational authorities. One of them also stressed the necessity of continued support from the British side and more collaborative initiatives in teacher training.

All in all, from the points of view of the two university administrators, the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability would depend on the presence and interplay of both project effort and external support. The attempts of the project team to provide various levels of award-bearing teacher training programmes to meet



diverse needs emerging in the educational markets and to conduct research related to teacher training and ELT were perceived to be potentially effective routes. The realisation of these aspirations was felt to be predicated upon the expansion and strengthening of the team and external ongoing support from the local government and from the British side.

## **Perspectives of AEI Administrators in Project A about the Programme**

AEI administrators' perceptions of the programme involved three major issues: their views about the project goals, the impact the project had effected on their teachers and ELT in their institutions, unfulfilled expectations, and their views about the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability.

### **AEI administrators' views about project goals**

The three interviewed administrators perceived the goals of the project as training English teachers, however, they seemed to have a vague idea of specific focuses of the programme possibly due to the nature of the programme as a directive from the top. One of them saw teaching methodology as a focus; while the other expected the teachers 'to improve their English, to update their teaching methods and to acquire cultural knowledge so that they could undertake teaching of some difficult courses in English, e.g. teaching methodology, translation, linguistics and literature'. Interestingly, one administrator viewed that 'the project was intended to develop the university as a leading provincial university through generating income from teachers who would take part in the project'.

### **AEI administrators' views about project impact**

There emerged a shared view that the project had made an impact on the trainees' personal professional competence and institutional development. One of them viewed that the project had impacted on the individual teachers in two ways. First, it 'had developed the teachers' cross-cultural communication competence and teaching abilities with the input of theoretical knowledge, practical teaching methods and

techniques and psychological qualities'. Second, the project 'had built up the teachers' confidence'. The recognition by their students of their teaching had boosted their self-esteem. Another administrator noted that the project had led to enhancement of teachers' expertise in ESP, improvement of teaching methods and better career prospects. The two teachers who had received training were perceived to be 'cranes among chickens'.

The three administrators recognised the impact on their departments and institutions. One acknowledged that it had been achieved through the trained teachers who 'had introduced new information to the institution to be adopted and absorbed by their peers' on the one hand, and through the onsite workshops delivered by the project team on the other, which was considered 'to have aroused the participants' interest in cross-cultural communications and have enhanced inter-institutional communications'. One administrator attributed the effect of the project on the institution to the trained teachers' influence, who were both promoted to be heads of their departments.

The AEI administrators held different opinions about the areas of unrealised impact. One of them highlighted the lack of accreditation of the programme as a drawback. In his/her view, certification would significantly contribute to participants' career prospects on account of the fact that 'higher qualifications were required for departmental development and teachers' personal development'. The drawback identified by another administrator was the lack of input of cultural elements in teaching.

### **AEI administrators' views about the project's longer-term sustainability**

There arose positive signs for the project's longer-term sustainability from the points of view of the three administrators. A commonly recognised favourable condition was the availability of institutional support to teachers. One administrator noted that a supportive environment existed in his/her institute that made attempts to promote project ideas and teaching methods, update teaching resources, create abundant

institutionally-funded in-service training opportunities to teachers, and support teachers' training in various forms, e.g. encouragement, time off, promotion opportunities, etc. Their students were highly receptive to the new teaching methods.

Another two administrators also highlighted a supportive environment in their institutions as a potentially facilitating factor. They noted that they attached more importance to integrating institutional development and teachers' individual development and providing financial support to their teachers accordingly.

A further favourable condition, as one administrator recognised, was the project's existing advantages as a joint venture specialised in teacher training.

Increasing value to be accorded to part-time training and qualifications, as observed by one administrator would bring about a breakthrough in recruitment for the project with large numbers of teachers who aspired to participate in in-service training.

As well as these favourable conditions, there emerged obstacles in recruitment, in the three administrators' view, which resulted from administrators' reluctance to support their teachers due to administrators' and teachers' practical concerns and difficulties, e.g. certification, shortage of staff in their institutions, and devaluation of short-term/part-time training. It was acknowledged that institutional evaluations that prioritised proportions of postgraduate degrees holders as one of the most important parameters, teachers' concern about higher qualifications resulted from institutional and social requirements were major causes of administrators' obsession with certification of training. Two administrators confessed that they covered two-thirds of their teachers' training fees if they could not obtain a degree (although they eventually reimbursed the one-third after the teachers returned upon their completion of their training). Teachers who had received training on the programme did not enjoy the same treatment as those who had completed a degree course. Teachers from the two institutions who had not obtained degrees from the project had to go on other award-bearing training courses, which was considered as a waste of time and energy.

*There are many similar training courses, but we still decided to send the two teachers on your project because of these advantages of your project. Of course we also expected them to get degrees. They themselves also had this expectation in mind. The institution and the society at large have posed pressure on them. This is a very practical concern. (AE01 79-82)*

*My institute has been concerned about certification. They hoped for a postgraduate degree or a degree awarded jointly with an overseas university. This is a big constraint. Wang Feng didn't get a degree from your programme, so he had to go on an MA course later. This would constrain the project development considerably. Even if your ideas are grand, if you don't have trainees, there would be nobody to implement and disseminate them. (AE02 149-54)*

As one administrator noted, the fact that 'short-term in-service training was not recognised society-wide' also contributed to administrators' reluctance to send their teachers on the programme. He/she expressed explicitly that they would stop sending teachers on any non-award bearing programmes.

One administrator suggested that fees had posed a potential practical problem for teachers on account of the institution's inability to fund their training given the increasing number of teachers who needed to pursue in-service training. Therefore self-sponsored teachers would rather participate in fee-paying award-bearing programmes.

The administrators' views about steps that might be taken to enhance the prospect of the project's longer-term sustainability consisted of both internal and external dimensions. The internal effort on the part of the team was considered as essential involving exercising more flexibility in publicity and recruitment with certification regarded as a prerequisite, and in teaching, providing follow-up support to target institutions, and establishing links with other training programmes.

The three administrators perceived flexibility as necessary. One underlined it as important to expand recruitment. A variety of alternatives were identified to improve recruitment: first degree courses for senior high school English teachers and undergraduates, short-term training courses, extension of training durations if necessary for some participants. One administrator suggested an award-bearing programme jointly with an overseas university as a potential attraction. Another administrator emphasised the effort on publicity by utilising various parties, including both horizontal and vertical dimensions.



Flexibility in teaching involved integration of western and traditional Chinese methods, which was recognised by two administrators. They both stressed the importance of ‘adapting to the realistic local contexts, e.g. characteristics of Chinese students and values of traditional methods, and integrating western and eastern ideas and practices’.

The three administrators perceived follow-up support to AEIs as of vital importance. A number of forms of support were recommended, including workshops, extended programmes, lectures given by both local trainers and English-native speakers.

One administrator stressed the necessity of ‘communicating and setting up links with other parallel training programmes’.

In addition to the internal endeavours to be made by the project team, external support was felt to be facilitating forces, as one administrator noted. He/she emphasised that the project’s sustainability would entail support from both governments. Contributions from diverse parities at different echelons were seen as necessary.

### **Summaries of Perspectives of Three Parties about the Project’s Longer-term Sustainability**

The three parties’ perspectives about major issues concerning the project’s longer-term sustainability are summarised as follows.

#### **Views about project goals**

In the view of the expatriates, the project aimed to generate economic prosperity in the province by means of developing AEI teachers’ language proficiency, general and ESP teaching methodology. The changes in goals were perceived to be related to low recruitment, breakdown of communication between two governments and mismatches between imported ideas and local context. The expatriates’ perception of

the effect of the changes was generally negative based on their consequence of causing confusion about project goals and an earlier closure of the project.

Despite the existence of differing degrees of specificity in understanding the project goals, a consensus arose among the university administrators that the project was intended to improve teachers' English proficiency and teaching. There existed confusion about the goals by local educational authorities from one administrator's point of view.

There emerged a vague understanding on the part of the AEI administrators of the project goals. A common view stood out that the project was intended to be focused on teacher training. One outlying view was that the project aimed to upgrade the university through generating income from teacher participants in the training.

### **Views about project impact**

From the expatriates' points of view, the project had produced both anticipated as well as unanticipated impact. The perceived anticipated impact was realised on project development, on the trainees, the development of the Faculty and the University, and overseas counterpart institution. The unintended impact was induced on the University in various ways.

In the university administrators' view, the project had generated both social and financial effects. It was considered to be conducive in social terms to the University, the Faculty and the project team; and beneficial in financial terms to the Faculty and the University by delivering part-time training courses in particular.

The AEI administrators viewed that the project had contributed to teachers' personal development and institutional development. The teachers were considered to have gained more competence and confidence. The institutions had benefited from the trained teachers who introduced new ideas as well as from onsite workshops delivered by the project.

Contributing factors, in the view of the expatriates, were three-fold: the effort made by the project team, the mediating role of the University and support to the team development through overseas training and the internal staff development programme.

From the university administrators' point of view, three factors were critical: the effort of the project team, the support from diverse levels concerned and western ideas which proved to be appropriate in the local context.

Unrealised impact was felt by the expatriates to be the existence of a gap between the original objectives and the actual outcomes of the project. In their view, poor recruitment had constrained the project's potential in teacher training and its capacity to support target institutions.

University administrators' perception of unrealised impact highlighted the project's lack of exchange of information with the outside world and the scope for wider and deeper influence.

There emerged divergence of opinions among the AEI administrators regarding areas of unrealised impact. Unsettled certification and lack of input of cultural knowledge in teaching were identified respectively by two administrators.

From the expatriates' perspective, five factors were impediments for the project's development, which were poor recruitment and publicity, inappropriateness of the project approach, confusion about project aims among various parties, poor communications between the project and other parties concerned, lack of support to the project and intrinsic drawbacks in project management. Their perspective brought to the fore efforts of diverse parties as well as communication and coordination between them.

University administrators identified external and internal obstacles in the process of project development. Internally the project had encountered financial constraints and

shortage of staff. Externally, a series of challenges had cropped up, namely unsettled accreditation, rigidity of policies about recruitment, lack of support from various parties and increasing competitions.

### **Views about the project's longer-term sustainability**

The project's prospect of longer-term sustainability, in the expatriates' view, first entailed the initiatives of the local participants. The project team's endeavours to undertake research in ELT and teacher training alongside delivery of alternative award-bearing training programmes integrated with existing normal programmes were highlighted as essential. On the other hand, the support from the University and the government was underscored as necessary.

University administrators highlighted the project team's effort and external support as crucially important to enhance the project's sustainability. The two conditions were considered to be inextricably interrelated. The effect of various forms of efforts on the part of the project team, e.g. allowing for flexibility in providing differing training courses to satisfy various needs, conducting research in teacher training and ELT were considered as dependent on further team development and continued support from two governments.

In the AEI administrators' view, the project was faced with a number of barriers which had led to low recruitment and might undermine the prospect of the project's sustainability, i.e. administrators' and teachers' lack of enthusiasm in non-award bearing programmes due to the realistic devaluation of part-time 'pure' training in the institutions and the society at large, and shortage of staff and financial burdens transferred to teachers themselves as a result of institutional financial constraints. Internal and external efforts were suggested as equally important. Internally, flexibility in publicity and recruitment, course delivery, follow-up support to target institutions and links, networks with parallel training programmes were perceived to be potentially contributory measures. External support from both sides was considered as an essential facilitating force for the project's sustainability.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Findings from Three Cognate Projects**

This chapter presents findings of data gathered from three cognate initiatives in the same geographical setting as the core project discussed in the proceeding four chapters. The findings are of two kinds: from interviews with project participants at team level and from official documents written by local educational authorities and expatriate project consultants.

#### **Views on Project Impact and Longer-term Sustainability**

##### **Project B**

Project B, based in a national teacher training university, was twice involved in cross-cultural teacher training respectively in the 1980s and 1990s. The first one aimed to train English teachers from senior high schools from underdeveloped regions in central China, and the second was intended to develop the expertise of English teachers from tertiary institutions in the same area. A group interview was conducted with four teachers who had been participants as trainers in the two training programmes. All of them were sent abroad for postgraduate studies during the project stage and are currently holding senior positions in the Faculty. Two of them are full professors, and the other two are associate professors.

In their view, the project had facilitated faculty development as well as individual teachers' professional development. Five team members received M.A. training abroad, which enabled them to undertake more responsibilities after their training. New courses were opened for undergraduates and postgraduates relating to teacher training and second language acquisition. Four team members wrote a textbook widely used by senior students in teacher training universities, which was considered by one of them as an unintended but very valuable impact.

In the interviewees' view, individual teachers' development was invariably beneficial to the development of the Faculty in terms of human resources and course development. It has largely enhanced the reputation of the Faculty, which has in turn paved the way for similar degree programmes in other subjects in the University. Marketing and recruitment has not been a concern since the start of those degree programmes. Off-site training programmes were still delivered regularly in three cities in southern China.

Another area of impact they identified was on teacher trainees since 1995. They noted that teachers' professional competence had been considerably enhanced, particularly in their research capacity. It had brought about better career prospects for them. Some secondary school teachers had found jobs in higher education institutions after their training.

Facilitating factors, as the interviewees recognised, were multi-dimensional. Firstly, the quality of the team, which had been strengthened by their overseas training, was seen as one of the crucial elements. The team members' attempts to apply what they had learned abroad to their own teaching were conducive to the programme. The quality of the team ensured the quality of the programmes. Secondly, support and coordination of diverse parties were viewed as contributory to its success. The team was authorised by relevant departments to advertise degree programmes in a national academics-oriented newspaper, which made the recruitment much easier. Thirdly, the regular ongoing evaluation carried out by the British Council played a monitoring role in the process of project implementation. Fourthly, cultural adaptation to local needs was perceived to be of vital importance, which was reflected in various respects.

Notably, flexibility appeared to be a facilitating factor. Flexibility in recruitment led to expansion of recruits from a wider range of targets involving local secondary school teachers and university teachers, and teachers from other regions. The high demand for higher qualifications was met by delivering postgraduate programmes. The concern about availability was alleviated by providing full-time and part-time

courses. Non-award-bearing short programmes were also delivered free of charge. Those four factors were felt to be important conditions for the project to expand.

As the interviewees noted, there were also dissatisfying aspects. Full-time courses had not brought about economic benefits although they were felt to have generated remarkable social effects. The team members, fully committed to the training programmes, found it hard to afford time and energy to conduct research, which outweighed teaching as an important criterion in professional promotion. The regular evaluation conducted by the British Council in the process of project development was not carried through, which was viewed as inhibiting the project's reflections on gains and losses and further development.

Two constraining factors were identified. The first was financial. The fact that approximately 60-70% teachers were fee-paying indicated that a substantial number of institutions were reluctant to fund teachers' training. The second was to do with cultural differences. Disagreements had occurred between local staff and expatriates on the number of copies of textbooks and references needed for teaching. The local staff preferred more references than over-simple textbooks, whilst the expatriates held opposite opinions.

### **Project C**

Project C was an ELP-focused initiative based in a national comprehensive university between 1997 and 1998. It sought to respond to an increasing need for English improvement of personnel engaged in professions associated with law within that province, and consequently contribute to economic development with the enhanced language proficiency. Three one-to-one interviews were conducted with three teachers who had been involved in Project C during that period of time. Two of them had received half a year's training abroad sponsored by the project. They are currently associate professors.

There was a consensus that the project had enhanced team members' professional development and the faculty development. First of all, the team members'

professional competence was felt to have been nurtured. In their view, overseas training and internal staff development programme had played a crucial role. Two interviewees mentioned the development of research competence and teaching methods of the team as a result of their project experience. One interviewee recognised that the project had fostered team members' cross-cultural communicative competence.

The effect of the project on the faculty development was reflected in the overall improved teaching beliefs and practices, and supplementation of up-to-date resources. One interviewee was particularly impressed with the impact of regular workshops on faculty development, which had involved the team and other staff in the Faculty. They had broadened teachers' horizons and helped them apply new ideas and teaching methods in their day-to-day teaching. It was also acknowledged that several courses delivered by the expatriate to undergraduates were perceived to be highly beneficial. Those two benefits, in one interviewee's view, were areas of unintended consequence.

The staff development programme and overseas training were identified as two major facilitating factors. In addition, one interviewee perceived four further factors as contributory: quality of the team and their commitment, cooperation between two sides, support from the Faculty and University, and the high demand for English training on the educational market as contributing factors.

The project was felt by the three interviewees not to have achieved its desired impact both in breadth and width. As one interviewee noted, the number of teachers involved in the programme was limited, and it had failed to raise the profile of the University. Constraining factors were felt to be multiple. The first and most highly endorsed one was lack of support from the University. It was felt that there had been insufficient involvement of the University, and thus very minimal effect due to the low priority it had given to the project. Reasons for that were shortage of staff on the one hand, and administrators' lack of interest in the project on the other hand. Shortage of staff was seen as a realistic physical hindrance, whilst the administrators'



perceptions of the project were considered as a marked disincentive. The administrators were more interested in literature than in teaching methodology, which was more highly rated in academic circles. In addition they were keener on projects that would potentially bring about practical benefits, e.g. a boosted image of the University or research funds to the University. One interviewee also noted that constant change of administrators was an exacerbating factor, which had led to minimal attention paid to the project.

A second perceived obstacle was lack of support from the government, which had seriously affected recruitment. As one interviewee commented, the absence of government support had created strenuous, but unrewarding jobs of marketing and recruitment for the team. On top of that, communication and coordination between relevant departments were lacking. One interviewee felt that the project would have stood a better chance of success if it had been supervised by the law department rather than the education department. One interviewee noted that the separation of the base of this project from the main one in Project A (the core project) was detrimental to the communication and development of the project. The lack of communication between the project and the government was also a constraining factor.

A third constraint, from the interviewees' point of view was the failure to take into account local needs. The most obvious one was certification. In one interviewee's view, the three-month short training course was unable to satisfy trainees' needs either in professional or practical terms. The reasons for the low recruitment were either that some companies had their own trainers; or that English was not highly required in work. Besides, the fact that the training would not lead to a well sought-after degree-level qualification would put off a large number of professionals and employers. Lack of financial support from employers would lead to considerably dampening of enthusiasm of prospective trainees.

The second element to do with insufficient attention to the local needs was felt to be the rigidity on recruitment. One interviewee remarked that a shift of focus from the

legal profession to secondary schools or adult education institutions could have created a turning point in recruitment because of the existence of high demand.

A fourth factor was confusion about goals among the team, as the three interviewees noted. It was shown that the three interviewees had different perceptions of project goals. One understood the goals as teacher training for AEIs initially, and general English training at a later stage. Another one admitted having no clear idea about the goals and perceived them as training teachers for the Faculty.

As far as the longer-term sustainability was concerned, the three interviewees highlighted support at two levels, i.e. the university level and government, as a must. Since the local environment was characterised by a top-down approach to management, the support from the government was felt to be of vital importance.

Additionally, cultural adaptation was considered as a necessity. In two interviewees' view, local needs should be taken into account and be responded to. Certification, flexibility in recruitment, mode of course delivery, length of training were important considerations.

## **Project D**

Project D is an initiative aimed at facilitating vocational educational development. It was started in 2001 and has been undertaking training of administrators and teachers engaged in vocational education at both secondary and tertiary levels.

Findings about Project D include three project participants' views, and views of national educational officials and expatriate project consultants expressed in their evaluation reports written in October 2003.

### **Project participants' perspective: interview findings**

Three one-to-one interviews were conducted in Project D. One interviewee was director of the programme, one was vice-director, and the third was an administrator

in the English Department of that university and acted as an interpreter in the project.

The interviews indicated that the project had achieved its impact in two ways. First, as the three interviewees commented, it had facilitated personnel training in vocational education in the province through short-term training courses and visits paid by 43 local personnel to vocational educational institutions. It had changed the perceptions of vocational education, which used to see vocational education as developing participants' practical manual skills. The project was recognised by national and provincial educational authorities as an exemplary project.

Second, from the point of view of two interviewees, the project had enhanced cross-cultural communication and exchange of information. Western ideas and experience in vocational education had been introduced to the local context. In the process of cooperation mutual understanding between the local staff, expatriates and trainees had been established. One interviewee noted that some trainees had made attempts to experiment with new methods in their own teaching contexts.

Three factors were felt to have helped the project make an impact on those two fronts. The first was the support from the University and the government, as two interviewees emphasised. Coordination between relevant parties at the government level and the University level was perceived to be contributing as well. The government's support included issuing supportive policy, taking charge of recruitment, providing facilities and accommodating expatriates during the period of their service. The training was provided free, and the accommodation was at a reasonable price. The university's support was reflected in its provision of a building and recognition of the local staff's work and financial reward to them.

The second facilitating factor was the responsiveness of the programme to the local needs, particularly in recruitment, times and length of training, which was felt by one interviewee to be appealing to trainees. Two months' training during the summer vacation did not clash with participants' normal work.

The third facilitating factor, in the view of one interviewee, was teaching methods employed by the expatriates. Trainees were generally pleased with their experience.

In sum, from the point of view of the project participants, a combination of support from diverse levels, flexibility in course length and recruitment, and communicative teaching methods were perceived to have been the three main factors which had led to the positive impact being realised.

There emerged two contrasting attitudes towards the effect of the programme. One was highly positive about the impact achieved up to date, whereas the other two were lukewarm about it. A series of drawbacks were brought up. One interviewee pinpointed certification as a major disappointment. In his/her view, the agreement on two NVQs (national vocational qualifications) failed to be reached due to the high cost perceived by the local participants and poor coordination between the University and the government.

Two interviewees considered the support from the British Council as insufficient. Both of them felt their financial input was lower than needed, and one emphasised that their involvement was also limited.

Two interviewees addressed cultural barriers in the process of project implementation in various ways, which had caused impracticability of applying imported ideas and practices in the local context. The first barrier lay in notional difference in terms of vocational education, which was felt to have been beyond expatriates' expectations and had led to an array of complications, e.g. tensions between local administrators and expatriate tutors. As one interviewee reported, western beliefs that vocational education was aimed at continually upgrading people's practical skills had been in tension with the local perceptions and practices that saw vocational education as manual labour and did not demand pre-service or in-service training. And he/she also acknowledged that local vocational education programmes normally awarded degrees upon completion of the course. Additionally, one interviewee noted the existence of considerable incompatibility between the



training system and the existing testing system, which he/she felt would make it difficult to carry through the training and to diffuse its influence to other training programmes.

From the point of view of one interviewee, there existed some problems in communication between local participants and expatriates. In his/her view, the expatriates lacked a readiness to adapt to local needs and circumstances. The expatriates' lack of flexibility was reflected in their sticking to the ideal number of class of ten against the local desired number of thirty (although they eventually made a compromise by accepting the number of twenty-five).

He/she also observed that the expatriates appeared to lack empathy as a result of their limited knowledge of local culture. In his/her view, they were fussy on trivial things and not open with the administrators. For example, they complained to the local government about the sanitation of the canteen instead of directly to the university administrators. They complained about their freedom having been restricted against the local administrators' intention of setting some regulations on night-outs to ensure their safety. The collaborations between the expatriates and interpreters did not always turn out to be smooth.

He/she also observed various kinds of problems regarding the quality of expatriates in management and teaching. The involvement of the expatriate coordinator was considered to be insufficient, which had greatly undermined the cooperation between the two sides. The selection of tutors was problematic, leading to underperformance of some tutors. There existed tensions between the expatriates, which had proven detrimental to the cooperation between them.

Student-centred teaching was considered as arbitrary and unsystematic. He/she observed that teaching plans had been prepared in haste. Handouts were seen as unsystematic. Discussions were felt to be ineffective.

With regard to the prospect of sustainability, two contrasting attitudes co-existed.

One view was that the project stood a high chance of further development based on two favourable conditions. The first was the availability of support from the government in the form of supportive policies and financial assistance, which was seen as an overriding condition for project development. It was understood that a consensus had been reached on qualifications among the three parties, i.e. the government (the Department of Labour and the Department of Labour Supply), the British Council and the project, which meant the training would be connected with degree courses and would greatly boost recruitment. Additionally, the fees would be a less of a concern for prospective trainees with contributions from two sources, one-third from the national education authorities and employers each.

The second favourable condition was the opening of a part-time postgraduate course delivered in summer and winter vacations, which was seen as a positive starting point. The flexibility in recruitment and training periods was considered as beneficial to the project's longer-term sustainability.

In contrast, a less positive view shared by two administrators was also revealed. One of them acknowledged a series of challenges to overcome. Financial constraints in vocational education institutions and the project were regarded as an obstacle, which would lead to vocational education institutions' reluctance to fund their staff for their training, and the project's unwillingness to provide further financial support. Given the loss of the expatriates and the inadequacy of the local tutors in both English proficiency and professional competence, the independent development of the project was perceived to be precarious.

However, in the view of the two interviewees, the project might stand a chance of further development if a number of conditions were met. First, the support from the government was seen as a *sine qua non*. One interviewee suggested that training of principals in vocational education institutions be made mandatory. Certification was regarded as a must in training programmes. Integration of the training with part-time undergraduate programmes was suggested for three-year-diploma holders. Second, the contribution from the British Council was felt to be important. More financial

input and involvement in project management were considered as necessary. Third, local staff training needed to be strengthened to assume the role of trainers given the absence of expatriate expertise.

### **Local national authorities' perspective: findings from evaluation report**

The evaluation report, written by two educators commissioned by the national government, addressed a number of issues, covering project goals, areas in which the project had generated an impact, unrealised impact and likely measures to be taken to enhance its sustainability.

It was stated that the project aimed to reach three objectives:

- To strengthen cooperation of the province and exchange with international vocational education;
- To promote all-round development of vocational education in the province;
- To improve management and teaching of vocational institutions through capitalising on British experience in vocational education.

According to the report, the project achieved an impact in the following areas:

- It had helped promote vocational education reform in the province.
- It had promoted a deeper understanding of British vocational education and increased awareness of a need to accelerate local vocational education. Vocational education personnel had become receptive to western perceptions and were applying them to their practice of teaching and management.
- It had initiated recognition of dual certificates, which had led to transition from traditional secondary vocational education to a 'combined training education'.
- It had trained over 300 personnel in vocational education at three levels, ranging from local education authorities to teachers. It had strengthened staff development in vocational institutions.

In the report, cooperation and investment from both the Chinese side and British side

were considered as an essential factor for the realised impact. Support from diverse levels had also played an important role. The local provincial and national governments had helped to improve the facilities of the project and smooth implementation. The university had supplied facilities and staff. Administrators' support at district, municipal and prefecture levels was also contributory. Vocational institutions' active support and participation helped to put the training on a firm footing.

Besides the payoffs of the project, problems were also addressed in the report, which included five elements.

- limited effect of the visits paid by the local participants, who failed to obtain in-depth knowledge about British vocational education due to the tight schedule;
- some drawbacks in teaching, for example, teaching plans and materials were not well prepared, the existence of difficulties in communication between tutors and trainees due to the inexperience of interpreters, and some degree of irrelevancy of some training content due to a lack of knowledge of training needs;
- some pitfalls in the project management system. A steering group of 8 people with 4 representatives from either side failed to be put into effect.

Suggestions were put forward in order for the project to further develop.

- Given a huge demand in vocational training and the realised impact of the project, vocational personnel training should continue at three levels, i.e. district, municipal and prefecture levels. Visits to the UK should also continue with clearer purposes.
- Diversity of forms of training is necessary to cater for various needs in different institutions and areas.
- Trainer training should be carried out in the form of cascade training, i.e. local teachers being trained abroad as trainers and undertaking training after completion of their training.
- The influence of the project should be expanded by turning it into a centre for



learning and research of British vocational education, and a centre for information exchange. Joint research should be conducted on vocational education with this project as a basis.

- An NVQ system should be introduced in the province. Concerted effort by both governments is of vital importance.
- A website should be set up for project participants and interested people to keep in contact with the project.
- To enhance project management and development, regulations should be set for trainers and trainees. Training should be more suited to trainees' needs. Teaching plans should be more detailed. Selection criteria for interpreters need to be formulated.

### **Expatriate's perspective: project consultant's evaluation report**

The evaluation report written by the project consultant revealed a positive attitude towards the effect of the project. The project was felt to have met its objectives. Its achievement was considered to have been yielded in the following aspects.

- Management of the project by the Steering Group was effective.
- Activities took place in accordance with the agreed timetable. The arrangements made and the resources deployed for the training programme were very good. The selection of consultants and trainers was appropriate for the task.
- The content of the training programme was relevant and timely. Participants were well motivated.
- The visits by the local participants to the UK were successful.

The limitation of the programme acknowledged in the report was the barriers in understanding between the trainers and the trainees even with the help of interpreters, whose interpretation standards were varied.

Recommendations were proposed in the report to enhance the project's prospects for sustainability.

- The model developed in the province should be used as a template for future projects.
- Follow-up visits are needed to monitor and reinforce the project development.
- The British Council should continue to pursue opportunities to promote this kind of project.
- English proficiency should be considered as one of the criteria in selecting participants.
- Visits by local participants to the UK should reinforce the outcomes of the training programme.

### **Summary of Views of Cognate Project Participants**

In the previous section, individual projects were discussed in relation to participants' views on project impact and longer-term sustainability. A summary is provided to present an overall picture of salient general features for the three projects and unique features for specific projects. The features are mainly concerned with facilitating factors for realised impact, hindering factors for unrealised impact and considerations that need to be taken into account for longer-term sustainability.

Overall, the three projects were considered to have contributed to individual participants' professional development and institutional development. In the case of Projects B and Project C at an individual level, teacher trainers had built up their professional competence by virtue of their overseas training, internal staff development programmes and working experience on the projects. They had upgraded their qualifications, broadened their horizons, started assuming more responsibilities, acquired more competence in teaching and doing research, and developed their cross-cultural communicative competence. This feature was not particularly salient in Project D where training was undertaken by expatriate tutors. Nevertheless, as was noted by both the project participants and the local government, the local participants, including provincial education authorities, vocational institution principals and project administrators had undergone a change in their perceptions of vocational education after their short-term visits abroad. Immediate

project participants had developed their cross-cultural communicative competence through their collaboration with expatriates.

Individual teachers' development had proven to be beneficial to faculty and institutional development in Projects B and C, as acknowledged by some interviewees. Human resources, course development, changes of teacher beliefs and practices were areas of benefits. Unintended impact was identifiable in these two projects, a nation-wide popular textbook in Project B and courses delivered to undergraduates by the expatriate and training that had involved a considerable number of non-project team members.

The impact on the receiving end of the two training programmes varied somewhat. Project B and D participants were particularly impressed with the effect of the training on their trainees. In Project B, the trainees had improved their professional competence and obtained better career prospects. In Project D, some trainees had made attempts to apply new methods in their own teaching contexts. In Project C, by contrast, effect on trainees did not stand out as a salient feature.

There emerged high convergence among the three projects on facilitating factors. Four factors were highlighted as crucial: the quality of and commitment of project teams, staff development programmes, effort made by the project teams, university and government support (including coordination between them), external support from the British Council, cultural adaptation represented in flexibility in recruitment, times and lengths of training, and certification. There also emerged peculiar features, e.g. in Project B, regular evaluation conducted by the British side in the course of the project was considered to have played an active role. In Project C, huge demands for English training in the local context were also perceived to be contributory.

As far as unrealised impact and constraining factors were concerned, there had arisen both similarities and differences. Project B participants, despite their general satisfaction with the width and breadth of the impact, had felt the economic reward was minimal in relation to their effort. The level of commitment required of the

project team was so high that they could hardly spare time for doing research. They also felt disappointment that the regular mid-project evaluation had not been carried through.

Project C participants were generally displeased with the width and breadth of their project impact. The small number of recruits had led to its failure to produce a large impact and enhance the reputation of the university.

There existed two contrasting views among Project D participants. One view was rather positive, whilst the other was fairly neutral. The positive attitude was based on the availability of support of local government and embryonic development of degree courses connected with the training. The neutral view was derived from a series of problems in project management and teaching caused by insufficient support from the British side and cultural gaps. The local government pinpointed two drawbacks in Project D to be heeded: the low level of relevancy of visits by the local participants to the UK and some contents of training, and problems in the project management. The expatriate highlighted the existence of barriers in understanding between expatriate tutors and local trainees.

There existed variations of opinions among the three projects about constraining factors. Project B participants highlighted minor disagreements between local and expatriate staff during the implementation stage, and funding at the current stage as impediments. Project C participants pinpointed lack of support from the University and the government as the main barriers to the project's development. The factor next to lack of support was a failure to take into account local needs and concerns, e.g. certification, lengths of training and targets of recruitment. Confusion about goals among the relevant parties was also felt to be one of the constraining factors.

With regard to the projects' sustainability, support at the University and government levels and cultural adaptation were underlined as indispensable to projects' longer-term sustainability.



In Projects C and Project D, a consensus emerged that support from the University and the government in the form of finance and favourable policies was the most important condition to enhance the project's sustainability. Certification was regarded as a major form of government support.

Unique views were also salient. Project D participants underscored support from the British side as necessary before the project could develop independently. Local trainer training was felt to be urgent. The local government emphasised initiatives to be made by the project team. Its recommendations included tightening up the project management, enhancing staff development, diversifying modes of training to fulfill various needs, issuing NVQs, conducting joint research on vocational education, and constructing websites. Besides, it also stressed continuation of communication with the UK through well-planned visits. The expatriate's view highlighted continued support from both sides to the project team. It suggested that local participants' visits to the UK should continue. English proficiency should be taken into account in participants selection to help the training to be more effective.

It needs to be emphasised that the presentation of the findings in the foregoing four chapters of 5, 6, 7, and 8 is generally descriptive with minimal comments from the researcher's point of view. The interpretation of the data to be presented in the following chapter will be more analytical and critical with the researcher's perspective involved.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part reviews the findings on crucial factors that may influence longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural initiatives. The second part concerns measures identified by various stakeholders which might be taken to enhance long-term viability of such initiatives. Thirdly, the concluding section of the chapter builds on these reviews to map out a conceptual framework.

The present chapter adopts an integrated approach to the findings presented in these preceding chapters, while also aiming to go one step further by interpreting the findings in terms of a conceptual framework which has also been informed by the review of the literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The conceptual framework generated seeks to illuminate the management of cross-cultural initiatives as a contribution to the literature and practice of educational management and its evaluation.

#### **Factors Affecting Longer-term Sustainability**

All four projects were endeavours made by two governments in the last two decades to serve dual purposes of enhancing individual and collective development in their respective capacities and all had clear objectives to achieve. In Guskey's terms (2000), the four initiatives were intentional events to enhance teachers' CPD.

As we saw in the previous chapters, all four projects had gone through an ever-evolving process, which was addressed by Fullan (1982) and Scott (1999). The change in goals in all four projects was a case in point. Project A had diverged from its original goals during the course of its implementation. There also emerged divergence of opinions about the effect of the changes; however, the fact remained

that changes in innovations were inevitable with changing circumstances. Prescriptions of outcomes did not work in the four initiatives.

The occurrence of unanticipated consequences, beneficial or dysfunctional was also evidence for the unpredictable nature of change which Fullan (1982, 1991) has extensively discussed. Project A trainers and expatriates noted a series of unexpected results: the establishment of an IELTS testing centre in the University, awareness raised of the need for marketing personnel training, the generation of a research project undertaken by one project team member, triggering reflection on project approach to change. Project B trainers acknowledged production of a nationally-recognised English textbook for university students by the team as an unanticipated impact and the development of the programme into an influential teacher training centre in China. Project C trainers identified two areas of beneficial impact beyond their expectation: the overall improved teaching and research competence of the faculty staff and provision of new courses to undergraduates.

Undesirable outcomes also happened in all four projects. The significant gaps that occurred in Project A between the impact achieved and the envisaged outcomes, caused its early termination due to the underachievement in enrolment. Project D was faced with the same issue of accreditation as Project A, which had not been on the funders' agenda.

There emerged a variety of interlocking factors which in the experience of the various stakeholders had affected the development of the four initiatives. The factors, it can be observed, seem to stem from two sources relating to: 1) roles and actions at varied levels, and 2) cultural transformation for the innovations to take root in the local milieu. Each of them is now reviewed in turn.

### **Factors relating to roles and actions at varied levels**

Roles at various levels involved within the initiatives proved to be significant. The three levels comprised: at the sectoral (macro) level, the two governments as funding

bodies; at the meso level, target institutions and training institutions where the initiatives were based; and the micro level, the project team and teacher trainees.

### ***The sectoral (macro) level***

Five factors related to national or provincial government and British sponsors arose as crucially important for longer-term sustainability of such initiatives. The projects had been considerably hindered due to limited support from the sectoral level, short-termism, over-reliance on a top-down approach, exclusive reliance on a college-based training model and lack of ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

### ***Support***

The issue of support emerged as a crucial factor in a number of respects. As was evident in Chapters 5, 6 and 8, participants in Projects A, B and C perceived the paucity of support as one of the main disincentives. The findings indicated that CPD had not received as much attention as it should have been as an integral part of institutional development, hence conflicts between individual and institutional development had arisen. The overall goals were more institutionally than individually oriented, since project goals had been set mainly with a view to upgrading institutional capacities in ELT.

At the government level, as we saw in Chapter 6, Project A trainers noted that insufficient support to individual teachers and institutions had resulted in more difficulties in recruitment of teachers. Supportive policies, e.g. concerning recognition of the training experience and certificates, and financial support were felt to be lacking, which had added a series of burdens to AEIs.

### ***Short-termism***

A notable similarity between the four projects was their once-and-for-all purposes in their training delivery to teachers, which contrast strikingly with the arguments



advanced by Guskey (2000), Eraut (1994) and Carless (1999) and others for training programmes achieving lasting impacts. The local government did not seem to have considered teachers' professional and personal needs as an integral part of their career and as integral to institutional development. Although they were all intended to boost the overall development of teachers' expertise, they were one-off events. Once a cohort of trainees had completed the formal programme, therefore, the programmes were concerned with the cohort that might succeed them, not with continuing needs, i.e. sustained improvement of teachers after the implementation stage through follow-up support. Similarly, all four projects were faced with fundamental problems of sustainability due to insufficient attention the government had given to their further development.

Substantial evidence emerged that opportunities to satisfy teachers' needs throughout their career were considerably limited, thus the majority of the trainees had to go on fee-paying courses at weekends or during vacations in order to avoid clashes with their day-to-day teaching. How long could the already upgraded expertise last? What kind of assistance might be available if they were to need further training? How could any subsequent difficulties of the implementation be addressed? It appeared to be the case that questions such as these had not been given serious and explicit consideration by the funders.

### *Top-down strategies of change*

Strategies of change were an influential factor in the four initiatives. The top-down or 'unilateral' strategy adopted by all four projects had the advantage of reaching a quick consensus and implementation in a hierarchical system, as is widely discussed in the literature (Beer and Nohria, 2000; Chapman, 2002; Waldersee and Griffith, 2004), however, it has the drawbacks of frequent implementation gaps. Across the four projects, misunderstanding and discord had arisen consequently between various parties who had their own opinions and preferences. Moreover, barriers to understanding and collaborations occurred not only between different levels but also between local and expatriate participants.

## *Models for CPD*

Models for CPD, similar to strategies of change, also appeared as a macro-level-related factor. The college-based approach (Kirk, 1988) adopted by all four training programmes had evident advantages. It integrated theories and practice and allowed teachers to be more reflective on their teaching practice and therefore led to fundamental changes in their beliefs and behaviour. Drawbacks were equally evident, nevertheless provided confirmation of warnings by Kirk (1988). It did not always precisely address concerns of individual institutions. It was sometimes too theoretical to illuminate the practical problems of the classroom. In Project A, there emerged a considerable gap between the course goals and trainees' expectations. As revealed in Chapter 5, a pervasive lack of interest in ESP was evident in the questionnaire findings. The reason for this gap consisted in the course providers' overlooking the trainees' needs in planning the programme at the outset.

## *Incomplete conduct of evaluation*

A final factor was the lack of ongoing evaluation, especially after the output stage, which has been widely recognised as dysfunctional (Bell and Day, 1991; Avalos, 1985; Henderson, 1978). It appeared that systematic and regular evaluations had been conducted throughout the implementation stage, but were not carried through. Indeed, the comment of a Project B trainer suggested that a wider impact would have been generated if ongoing evaluations had been carried out from beginning to end. This limitation was equally applicable to all projects.

## *The meso level*

Constraints also derived from the meso level, which confirmed the view of Kirk (1988) and Georgiades and Phillimore (1975) that the absence of institutional support would undermine the operation of training programmes, however smoothly they run at a micro level. Lack of support to the project teams and AEI teachers was the major disincentive.

### *Lack of support to project teams*

Insufficient support from university administrators to the project teams had led to various kinds of difficulties in Projects A, B and C. Project A had experienced financial problems, which had caused enrolment crisis, and dampened project team morale, but university administrators did not seem to have taken these problems on board. Project B was confronted with the issue of maintaining the motivation of the overworked project team. Project C was terminated mainly due to the limited support from the university administrators.

Reasons for the lack of support across the four initiatives were much commented by project teams. From their perspective, lack of awareness of the value of the projects on the part of administrators was the main factor. Projects A and B trainers felt recognition of the commitment made by the teams to be lacking. Constraints in personnel resources emerged as the second reason. As Projects A and B trainers recognised, the project teams had had to assume dual commitments in their own faculties and on the projects because recruiting new team members had remained difficult. Relatively lower status of ELT as compared with applied sciences arose as the third reason. This is particularly salient in Projects A and C.

### *Lack of support to AEI teachers*

It was also evident that support from AEIs to teachers had fallen short of expectations. The questionnaire findings in Chapter 5 indicated that institutional support enjoyed a low ranking as compared with intrinsic factors and other extrinsic reasons. Only a small number of teachers received financial support from their institutions and it was quite difficult for them to obtain more opportunities for sponsored training. Equally, it was revealed in Chapter 6 that teachers' extrinsic motivations such as pressure for higher qualifications, practical concerns about affordability and availability, and individual expectations from training programmes had not been taken into serious account.

Various views emerged about the reasons for this paucity of support. Project A trainers attributed it to unavailability of supportive institutional environment. AEI administrators were still unaware of the importance of providing opportunities for teachers to enhance their professional competence continuously and might be concerned about the potential consequences of training in the form of a subsequent 'brain-drain' of experienced teachers. AEI colleagues and students were apathetic towards new methods because of their great divergence from the foci of exams.

Project A trainees highlighted administrators' lack of recognition of part-time training, part-time qualifications and non-award-bearing INSET programmes as a result of the devaluation of part-time learning experiences in the society at large. The unequal status of English teachers in their institutions, constrained budgets and shortage of staff were further inhibiting factors.

From a different perspective, AEI administrators in Project A, who were most concerned with qualifications of staff for the assessment of faculties and institutions, perceived accreditation as a major reason for their reluctance to provide support to their teachers. This concern was deepened by long-standing financial constraints and shortage of staff.

### ***The micro level***

Echoing the work of Anley (1993), Doyle and Ponder (1977) and Whitney (1988), obstacles to sustainability also arose at the micro level. The obstacles at this level mainly applied to project teams, including lack of effort in providing follow-up support to AEIs and teachers, lack of persistent commitment, lack of communication within the project teams and with outside world.

#### ***Lack of follow-up support on the part of the project team***

Follow-up support on the part of the project team was found to be lacking to varying extents in all four initiatives, and stood out as one of the major hindering factors. The



need for follow-up support arose as a salient issue in Project A, however, the capacity of the team in that respect was found to be limited. Project B, successful and influential throughout China though it was, had given priority to teachers' immediate needs rather than their future needs and collective needs of institutions. Similarly, Project D's main concern was to involve as large a number of institutions as possible with minimal consideration of follow-up support.

### *Lack of persistent commitment*

Much data echoed the perception of lack of persistent commitment by project teams as detrimental to training programmes' sustained development (see, for example, Anley, 1993; Doyle and Ponder, 1977). Project A trainers recognised a combination of internal problems, such as financial difficulties, low recruitment, management problems, the high level of commitment required and burnout of the project team. These internal predicaments were aggravated for external reasons: the lack of recognition of the commitment and value of the project by the meso level and macro level, the considerable gap between the team expertise and trainees' lack of motivation and dissatisfying English proficiency, and the unsettled issue of accreditation. Project A university administrators perceived burnout of the team and the chronic problem of poor recruitment as demoralising factors. Shortage of staff was a serious hindrance.

Similarly in Project B, the financial rewards to the project team were negligible as compared to their level of commitment. The team found it hard to spare time to do research, which was one of the main criteria for promotion. In Project D, the risk was of dampened enthusiasm. As one project administrator noted, it was caused in part by the insufficient financial support from the external sponsors, and in part by a series of complications in collaboration with expatriates.

### *Lack of internal communication*

Lack of internal communication appeared from the findings as a detriment to the implementation of INSET programmes. Project A trainers noted that management problems were to do with lack of communication in the team at a parallel level for both cultural and personal reasons, i.e. between local staff and expatriates as well as among the local staff themselves; or with the team manager at a vertical level especially when misunderstandings occurred. Differing cultural perspectives about dealing with disagreements and individual working styles led to the staff being reticent about problems, either trivial or substantial.

### *Lack of communication with outside world*

The grassroots' lack of communication with outside world cropped up as a further internal disincentive. From the point of view of the university administrators and AEI administrators, Project A's influence was still limited in breadth and width. In the view of the administrators, the project had remained alienated from the professional community of which it formed a part, not liaising sufficiently with other organisations specialised in teacher training.

Interestingly, project team expertise stood out as one of the main strengths of all four projects, which makes a marked contrast to the 'cloning effect' noted in the literature by Duff (1988) addressed in the literature. There emerged much evidence about trainees' changes in their beliefs and practice, which had received recognition and support from their institutions. 'Inadequacy of trainer expertise' (e.g. Rossner, 1988 and Duff, 1988) was only applicable to Project D, which was still running up to the time of the investigation and relied heavily on expatriate trainers. The project administrators stressed training of local tutors to build a competent team as an urgent need if the programme was to be sustained.

### ***Lack of communication between three levels***

Lack of communication and mutual understanding was also notable in the findings between as well as within various levels. Again, it confirms the arguments expressed by Fullan (1991) and Anley (1993). Confusion about project goals was a pervasive feature in Project A, which had been caused by inactive and insufficient communication between the relevant parties about anticipated achievements. A consensus on the intended outcomes seemed to be lacking. Similarly, in Project C, project goals had remained unclear to some participants, and the trainers differed in their interpretations of the project goals.

It was also evident that the participants in the four initiatives tended to look at the various emergent problems from their own perspectives, and to be critical of others. This had created significant gaps in understanding between the diverse groups of participants, and a lack of speed in responding to emergent issues.

### **Factors relating to cultural transformation**

Cultural factors were the second major source of impact on the longer-term sustainability of the initiatives. Four culture-related problems emerged from the findings: cultural mismatches between imported technology or practices and local conventions, resistance in the local context, unavailability of resources and teacher financing and lack of planning.

#### ***Cultural mismatches between imported technology or practices and local conventions***

The first culture-related factor was cultural mismatches between new perceptions and practices and local conventions, expressed by a number of researchers (Green, 1991; Lado, 1957; Kennedy, 1988; Markee, 1993). This appeared to be a salient issue in three projects. In Project A, the project approach was questioned by one expatriate for its neglect of cultural differences and local needs, which had led to a considerable

gap between the sponsors' aspirations and the clients' expectations. Accreditation was considered by the local participants as one of the major influential factors for the project's recruitment and longer-term sustainability, but was taken lightly by the British side. ESP was not much needed by teacher trainees, but had been given much emphasis by the funders. Support in various forms from all levels to the project team and to teachers at different stages was taken for granted by the British sponsors, while it was seriously lacking in the local context. Moreover, there existed disagreement to varying degrees between local participants and expatriates in Projects A, B and D on teaching and management as a result of cultural differences. This in turn had constrained project implementation to some extent.

### *Resistance in the local context*

The second culture-related problem evident in the findings was resistance in the local context, a factor whose importance has been identified by Fullan (1991), Lipsky (1980) and Trowler (1998). The findings show that resistance could come from diverse sources. In Project A, obstacles raised to limit teachers' participation in the training programme came from their administrators, their colleagues, teachers themselves, and from their students. In Projects A and D barriers came from within their institutions to teachers' experimentation with new ideas and methods in their normal teaching contexts. Additionally, resistance could result from inherent drawbacks of new ideas and practices, despite the overall satisfaction with the training programmes. Some perceived distinctive features in course design, teaching methodology, teaching materials, evaluation and assessment turned out not to be thought of as highly thought of by the trainees, especially the part-time trainees. This may have resulted from part-time trainees' hitherto limited exposure to western ideas, teaching methodology and techniques, given the fact that the vast majority of them were three-year-diploma holders and primary and secondary school teachers. Their teaching contexts were generally likely to have been more isolated and more exams-driven.



Resistance - or more precisely - apathy on the part of meso-level administrators was evident in Project C. The reasons for their apathy might be attributable to multiple factors, such as the relatively low status of English teaching methodology as compared with literature and science, priority given to a large number of national-level research projects which could bring about more benefits to the University, and confusion about the project goals.

### *Unavailability of resources*

The third culturally deterring factor arising from the findings was unavailability of resources and teacher financing. Funding emerged as a practical constraint for AEIs in Project A. Shortages in resources materials and budgets had posed difficulties for teachers in accessing up-to-date materials and adapting their teaching materials. Large classes created difficulties in conducting group work. Financial problems in Project B applied to target institutions and the project team, who both felt it increasingly difficult to continue to fund teachers. Project D had also been faced with the difficulty of financing participants from vocational institutions.

### *Lack of planning*

Lack of planning emerged as the fourth dimension regarding cultural deterrents. Although all four projects were well-conceived with clearly defined aims, from the point of view of many stakeholders, the overall planning of them in relation to the local environment was not thorough. As we saw, accreditation, taken lightly by the external sponsors in the planning process, became a major obstacle to enrolment in Projects A and C. Insufficient importance was attached to coordination and collaboration between relevant parties at the launch stage, including the project team, the university, target institutions, the local government and external agency.

## **Measures for Longer-term Sustainability**

This section summarises findings on measures for longer-term sustainability. While it overlaps the first part to some degree, its focus differs in centring on stakeholders' perceptions of what might be done to overcome the constraining factors discussed in the previous section and to enhance the initiatives' further development. Two dimensions emerged in correspondence with the two types of hindrances mentioned above: A) roles and actions at the three levels (macro, meso, and micro), and B) cultural continuity and adaptation.

### **Roles and actions at diverse levels**

Roles and actions at diverse levels included support to be provided by the government and institutional levels, commitment and expertise of the project team, and interactions between them.

#### *Support from government and institutional levels*

Given the paucity of support from various levels as one of the main constraints, as we saw in the previous section, the need for support from them emerged as a catalyst to tackle existing problems. Notably, the local participants viewed ongoing external support from the British government as an equally important facilitating factor as the support from the local government.

Project A participants highlighted support from the macro and meso levels to the project team and AEI teachers to reduce long-standing drawbacks. They suggested recognition of the project team's commitment, financial support to AEI teachers, provision of resources, settling certification and recruitment as potentially effective measures. They also emphasised coordination of relevant parties at both horizontal and vertical directions to minimise blockages and complications in running the programme. Contributions from the external agencies were stressed as important conditions.

Similarly, the need for support from two governments was called for in two other initiatives. Project B trainers stressed the role of support from the local government as vitally important for the project to be sustained. In the meantime, continued support from the British side was also emphasised, for example with ongoing regular project evaluations to ensure its continuous improvement. In Project D, local participants emphasised the importance of the support from both governments. Moreover, they suggested making CPD as mandatory for teachers.

### *Commitment and expertise of the project team*

As we saw in the first section, four major drawbacks at the project team level had posed hindrances to the projects' development. To address these problems, four parameters, which have been widely recognised in the literature, e.g. Lewin and Stuart (1991), Yat-ming (1991), Waters and Vilches (2001), West-Burnham (1992), Fullan (1993), Hargreaves (1992), arose as of vital importance: exercising flexibility and adaptability in course delivery, establishing collaborative cultures at the team level, capitalising on the role of team leadership, building up networks and conducting research to strengthen project development.

Common to the four projects, flexibility of course delivery in mode, length and focus to cater for a range of needs was regarded as of prime importance to enhance those projects' sustainability. Besides, ongoing follow-up support to AEI teachers was considered as a must to fulfil the purpose of continuously facilitating both individual and institutional development. Continuous team development was therefore perceived to be crucially important. Research was considered as potentially facilitative for project development. Setting up outward links with other training programmes was suggested as beneficial for exchanges of experience and collaborations. To enhance the viability of the four projects, needs of prospective trainees were considered as one of the major considerations.

Project A trainers stressed sustained commitment of project team to improving project management and course delivery. They suggested that a supportive atmosphere should be cultivated to ameliorate cohesion and strength of the team.

Project A trainees prioritised follow-up support on the part of the project team as a further important consideration to help the new perceptions and practices take root.

Project A expatriates emphasised local participants' adaptability to enhance the prospects for longer-term sustainability. Similar to the AEI administrators and trainers, they recommended provision of training programmes well aligned with existing normal degree programmes as potential routes. Additionally, they viewed conducting research in ELT and teacher training as a means of exploiting the project's capacity.

Adaptability also appeared to be crucially important in other projects. Project B trainers highlighted flexibility in recruitment and course delivery and reduction of fees. Project C stressed the importance of certification as well as flexibility in recruitment, mode of course delivery and length of training. Project D participants pinpointed diversification of training and certification as necessary. They also recommended conducting research and setting up links with other programmes as another direction of development. The realisation of these goals entailed team development for the local participants to deliver training independently. This adaptability required is one of the features of cultural continuity and adaptation, which will be discussed in the next section.

### *Interactions between the three levels*

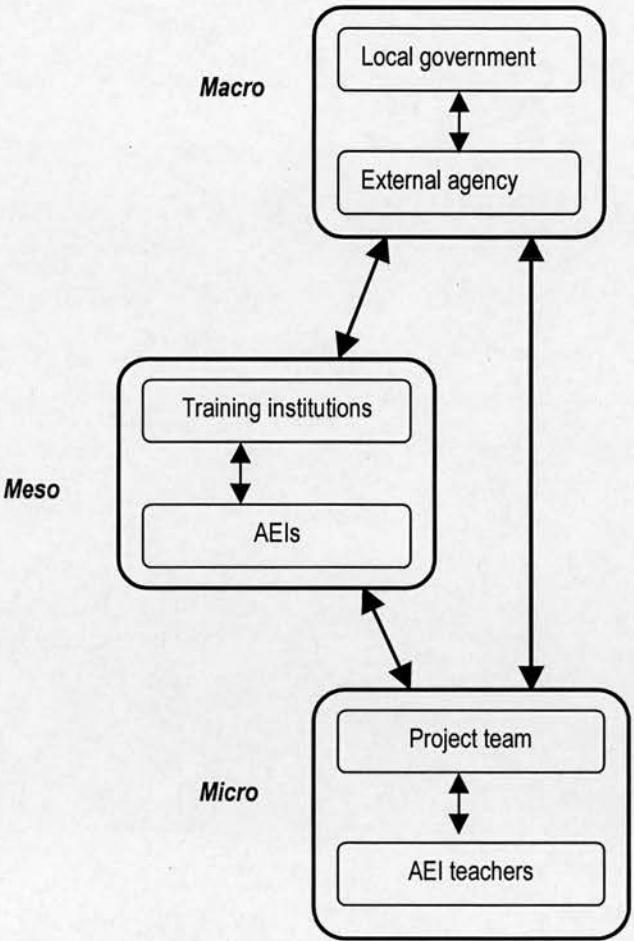
As was noted in the previous section, breakdown of communication considerably constrained the projects' development. There emerged a need for dynamic interactions between diverse parties. This finding supports the views of Haffenden (1991), Dean (1991), Nwakoby and Lewin (1991).



There emerged a consensus across the four initiatives that coordination between all parties was essential throughout the implementation process. As far as Project A was concerned, there arose an agreement that the chronic issue of certification would require coordination of all departments concerned, especially interactions between the two governments. The trainers highlighted the role of team leader and the mediator at university level in their communication with AEIs, the local government and British funders. The expatriates stressed the maintenance of channels of communication between the project team, the AEIs, the university and the local government.

Project B highlighted coordination between the two governments at the parallel level, and between a variety of local parties at the vertical level on publicity and implementation of training courses. Project C considered the communication between three parties, i.e. the project team and the university, and the government as crucially important to empower the project team. Project D administrators attached much importance to collaboration between five parties, i.e. the project team, the university, target vocational institutions, the local government and the British funders. The absence of any of these parties, in their view would undermine further development. Figure 9. 1 provides an illustration of interactions that should be maintained between the three levels. It shows that interactions between the parties at parallel levels and those at vertical levels are equally important. A dynamic cycle of communication needs to be kept to ensure each party's accountability and coordination between them.

**Figure 9.1 Interactions between three levels involved in cross-cultural INSET initiatives**



**Cultural continuity and adaptation**

As indicated in the first section, constraints also arose from cross-cultural encounters between local participants and British counterparts. This part concerns the perspectives of the stakeholders on how to minimise cultural hindrances.

As far as Project A was concerned, much emphasis was given to cultural adaptation in project management, approaches to course delivery and teaching. This supports the claims made by Trowler (1998), Dawson (1994), Ellis (1996), and Holliday (1997). Certification and flexibility emerged as two principal considerations. The

trainers highlighted adaptability in project management and teaching, which could be realised through integration of beneficial elements from western and Chinese approaches. The trainees underlined the need for flexibility in course delivery and settling the unresolved issue of certification. The expatriates underscored accreditation and alignment of training programmes with existing degree programmes, which again supports the literature. Furthermore, they suggested alternative modes of training, e.g. outreach programmes and distance learning were suggested. Similarly, AEI administrators also emphasised the importance of flexibility, particularly in recruitment and teaching. They also considered certification as an essential ingredient to be taken into account. In their view, expanding audience of training and diversifying modes of training were urgent. University administrators highlighted localisation as necessary. They suggested alternative award-bearing training programmes as the main direction of development. The increase of training modes was recommended.

Adaptability also arose as a critical measure in Projects B and C. Flexibility in recruitment, and times and lengths of course delivery were considered as effective policies in both projects. In addition, it emerged from Project B that teachers' financial situations needed to be taken into account.

Akin to the three initiatives, certification and flexibility also emerged as potentially effective measures in Project D. Project administrators suggested part-time postgraduate programmes.

Fostering intercultural maturity, addressed by King (2002), Meyer (1991) and Ortiz (2000) etc, was not explicitly mentioned in the data. Nevertheless, the implications for developing cross-cultural communicative competence loomed large from the findings. Mutual understanding on the part of both sides and tailoring imported culture about management of CPD and course delivery to be suited to the local milieu entailed a command of intercultural maturity in the operation of the four initiatives.

## **Conceptual Framework: Decisive Factors for Longer-term Sustainability**

This section provides a conceptual framework that emerged from this study based on both the review of the relevant literature and analyses and interpretations of the data. It can be argued that the longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives entailed 1) the presence of positive influence of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors; and 2) successful cultural adaptation and integration. To achieve the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, communications and collaborations between all parties concerned were essential. Cross-cultural aspects permeated these two categories. Cultural adaptation was necessary to make the innovations well suited and take root in the indigenous context. For further details of the stakeholders' views about these factors, see Appendix 3.

### **Intrinsic and extrinsic factors**

Intrinsic factors refer to the internal qualities at the micro level, the project team. Extrinsic factors refer to the multiplicity of elements and diverse perspectives influencing viability. Mediation between the two dimensions was necessary. Diversity of perspectives was a prominent feature that needed to be taken into account. It is necessary to note that the division between intrinsic and extrinsic factors is not clear-cut. A broad distinction between them has its value in analysis.

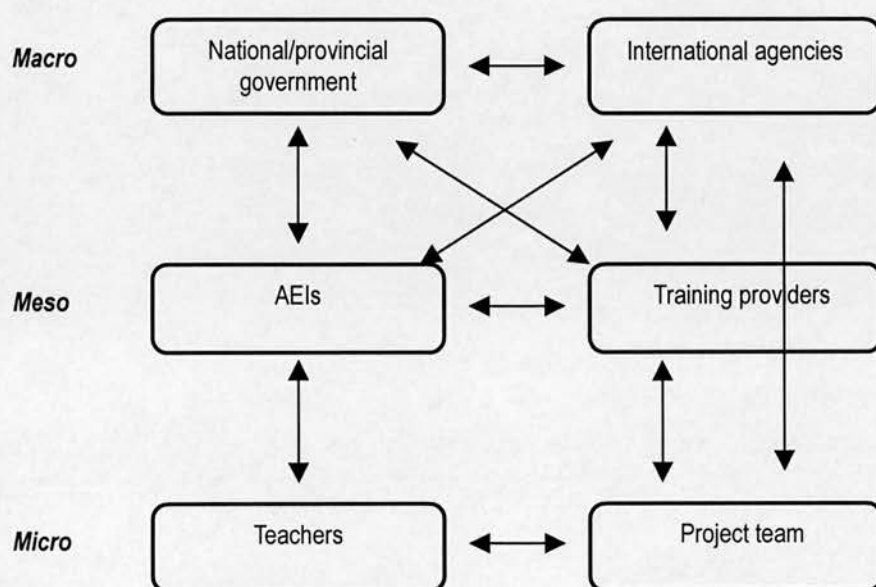
Figure 9.2 is an attempt to capture the variety of crucial elements with regard to the longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. It presents intrinsic factors at the project team level and extrinsic factors relating to six parties beyond the project team. Given the complexity of components of stakeholders, all these factors needed to be taken into account although the level of importance of them varied for different tasks and different stages. As Figure 9.2 shows, interactions between relevant parties needed to be maintained.





Figure 9.3 focuses on the relationship between three levels and communication patterns that should take place. It suggests that communication and mutual understanding was essential to facilitate interactions both within and beyond the levels. It demonstrates that interactions need to occur between all levels concerned to achieve positive impacts of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Interactions between the macro and meso levels might provide the micro level with more incentives. As Figure 9.3 shows, interactions would mainly happen between adjacent levels. Interactions across the levels, e.g. between international agencies and project team would be realised via consultancy visits.

**Figure 9.3 Interactions between three parties for longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives**



### *Intrinsic factors*

Intrinsic factors involved a multiplicity of conditions from the perspectives of various stakeholders related to the project team, including

1. Course quality
2. Team morale & expertise
3. Project management

4. Economic viability
5. Resources and facilities
6. Follow-up support to AEs by the project team
7. External communication with relevant parties by the project team

These seven internal factors appeared to be necessary conditions to ensure sustained effort and contributions from the project team. Course quality was endorsed by all groups of stakeholders. Certification and diversification stood out as two overriding issues. Certification appeared to be a fundamental consideration for the success of the initiatives. This was supported by the fact that Project B had gone through a smoother development process with academic credibility settled at the implementation stage, whilst the other three projects had experienced more difficulties as non-award-bearing programmes. Diversification of training appeared as another crucial factor. Adapting the existing training courses into different modules to meet various needs, or delivering courses connected with the existing degree programmes was commonly endorsed by all four projects.

Project team morale and expertise was perceived to be decisive to the quality of training. It entailed two elements: the team's sustained high level of commitment, their qualifications and professional expertise in relevant fields, i.e. ELT methodology and teacher training in the case of Projects A, B, C, and vocational education in Project D. High level of project team expertise had played an important part for the development of Projects A, B and C, whereas in the view of Project D participants, enhancing the project team's expertise was an urgent issue to be addressed.

Project management appeared to be an important issue from the course providers' perspectives (training institutions and project team). It involved continuous effort for staff development and team building. Ongoing staff development was considered as necessary. Additionally, recruiting new members was needed in all four projects. Moreover, communication in the project team appeared to be essential. Mutual understanding was desirable both between the local participants, and between local

participants and expatriates. Project A highlighted the role of project manager to foster a supportive and collaborative atmosphere. Integration of Chinese and western management approaches was seen as effective.

Economic viability was one of the primary concerns for training providers. Financial difficulties were reported to varying degrees in three projects. Project A had been considerably hampered by its long-standing deficits and was still in a harsh financial predicament up to the date of the investigation. The recognition of the project team's commitment in financial terms was needed. Projects B and D also had felt the pinch of tight budgets. They found it hard to continue to assume part of the financial responsibilities for the AEI teachers. Strengthening the projects' financial capacities was thus seen as an urgent need.

Resources and facilities appeared to be important conditions from training providers' points of view. Up-to-date facilities were perceived to have been contributing factors in Projects A and D. The need for continuous upgrading of resources and facilities was also emphasised with the passage of the years. More supply of up-to-date resource materials and high-tech facilities were perceived to be urgent.

Follow-up support by the project team to AEIs was an important issue for clients (trainees and their employers) and expatriate participants in Project A. There arose a consensus among the five groups of informants about the scarcity of follow-up support to AEIs and teachers. Support in forms of workshops and consultancy visits was needed. Networking was called for to enhance communications between teachers and to disseminate innovations.

The project team's communication with relevant parties emerged as a salient feature in all four projects. The team's effort alone would not generate an influence as wide as hoped for. Communication with other parties was thus considered as of vital importance. In addition, all local participants in Project A stressed further collaborations with overseas institutions in running degree programmes as a potential route.



These seven elements were important conditions to be fulfilled to optimise the effect of the intrinsic dimension. However, the achievement of the seven dimensions required not only the roles and actions specified on the part of the project team, but also those of all participants although the level of effort required might be varied depending on the characteristics of the tasks. For instance, diversification of training largely depended on the part of the project team; whereas, certification, an intrinsic factor though it was, was beyond the power of the project team. The responsibility would lie with the government. Economic viability would call for the joint effort of the project to generate incomes and financial support from the government in providing resources and facilities.

These intrinsic factors were not equally important. Three of them were fundamentally important for the projects' longer-term sustainability: course quality, team morale and expertise, and economic viability. Course quality entailed academic credibility and diversification of training programmes. Team morale and expertise required the team's commitment and expertise to ensure high qualities of training. Economic viability concerned the project team's survival. These three factors would have knock-on effects on the other four factors.

A number of observations about the findings are worth mentioning. Diversity of perspectives emerged as a salient feature. Economic viability was a major concern for project implementers on the ground. Follow-up support was a concern for clients, but not necessarily for training providers. Project team's external communication was highlighted by local participants, but not seen as an issue by expatriates. Therefore communication between the diverse parties arose as a means of mutual understanding and collaborations.

It needs to be emphasised that the intrinsic factors were necessary but not sufficient conditions, as was revealed from the four projects. The internal qualities alone would not induce the desired longer-term sustainability. External conditions also played an important part.

### *Extrinsic factors*

Extrinsic factors involved roles and actions of parties beyond the project team: micro level (AEI teachers), meso level (training providers and AEIs) and macro level (local government and external agencies). The extrinsic factors included

1. Support from macro level to the project team
2. Support from macro level to the AEIs and teachers
3. Support from training providers to the project team
4. Support from AEIs to teachers
5. AEI teachers' enthusiasm and motivation
6. Societal factors

*At the macro level*, contributions from two governments were equally important. Their support was necessary to project teams and AEIs. A consensus emerged among the four projects that support to project teams was essentially important in forms of provision of resources and facilities, public backing in accreditation and recruitment. Project B had been particularly successful in its recruitment with the political support from two governments in recruitment and certification.

There also emerged divergence of opinions between local and expatriate participants on the support to the project team. All local participants stressed the need for sustained support from the British side in various forms. They aspired further collaborations, e.g. provision of collaborative degree programmes, ongoing follow-up support to both the project team and AEIs by means of delivering workshops, providing resource materials and conducting regular evaluations of project progress. They noted that the continuing involvement of the British side, would help to keep the resources updated, ensure the quality of training and increase the prestige of the initiatives. This view had borne a striking contrast with the expatriates' perception of the emphasis being on local participants' initiatives.

Follow-up support from the sectoral level to AEIs was salient in Project A. Political support was felt to be necessary, e.g. recognition of the teachers' training experience and qualifications, and financial support were needed.

*At the meso level*, university support to the project team and AEIs' support to teachers received high endorsement as an essential condition in all four projects. Its presence/absence was found to have made a striking difference to the effect of those programmes. Project A trainers emphasised administrators' recognition of the value of the project and the commitment of the project team as well as provision of financial support. Project C trainers highlighted understanding of the project on the part of the university administrators as crucially important, which was perceived to be able to lead to their support in all forms. All four projects highlighted training providers' recognition of the project team's commitment and the value of the programmes, political support in publicity and recruitment, intervening relevant parties, and provision of resources and facilities.

Parallel to training providers' support to the project team, institutional support to AEI teachers, especially at the inception and sustainability stages emerged in all four projects as one of the crucial factors for longer-term sustainability. AEI administrators' awareness of the importance of teachers' CPD emerged as one of the decisive factors for teachers' availability. Their supportive attitudes towards innovations represented in providing resources and facilities, and recognition through practical rewards, e.g. pay rise and promotions, might induce a supportive institutional environment.

Teachers' enthusiasm and motivation also played a part as an extrinsic factor. It was notable in the four projects that teachers' aspirations for professional development and better career prospects would be important determinants for their participation in training programmes, which would in turn affect recruitment of training programmes.

Finally, the influence of the local social economic educational system was remarkable in all four projects. As Project A university administrators and AEI administrators noted, the increasing value accorded to part-time training and qualifications by the society would be a potential driving force for AEI administrators and teachers. Project A trainers and trainees recognised the potential influence of shift of focus of educational system from exams to communicative competence on AEIs' and teachers' attitudes towards in-service training. An increased awareness of the importance of teachers' continuous pursuit of CPD by the general public would be facilitating to teachers' enthusiasm for training.

In a nutshell, support emerged as one of the decisive conditions for the longer-term sustainability of the four initiatives. On the one hand, support was required from the local government at the macro level, the university and the AEIs as clients at the meso level. The communication and coordination between them were necessary. On the other hand, support from the British side was equally important, especially from the perspective of the local participants. The follow-up support would help the initiatives stand a higher chance of sustainability with the British contributions in resources and facilities, evaluations and professional guidance in both teaching and project management.

The pervasive influence of local social economic education system was found to be acute on internal support from the three parties and teachers' motivations for CPD. The general values held on part-time training and qualifications would induce repercussions on the recruitment of training programmes and their prospects of viability.

Of the six factors, support from the macro level to the project team and to AEIs and teachers were two fundamentally important factors. The attitudes of the macro level would largely determine the value of the initiatives, the morale of the project team, the level of support from the meso level in the hierarchical society.

In summary, the intrinsic and extrinsic factors both had their parts to play to enhance

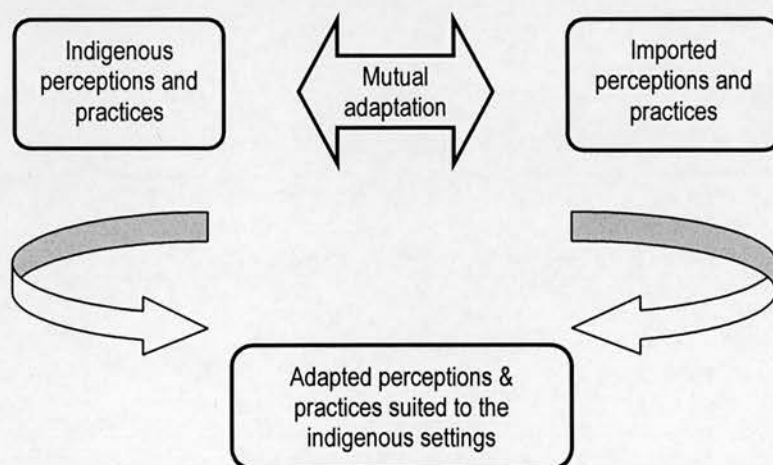


the projects' longer-term sustainability. The fulfillment of the two dimensions of factors was dependent upon the fulfillment of roles and responsibilities of the three levels, although different levels of effort were required for different tasks. It was also revealed that apart from the part played by the three levels, the mediation and communication between them was also crucially important to ensure positive influence of these factors happening, and coordination between the relevant parties being achieved.

## Cultural transformation

Cultural transformation, as the second main dimension of the conceptual framework permeated intrinsic and extrinsic factors concerned with all levels of participants. Adaptations of areas of incongruence between local and imported perceptions and practices were necessary. The process and outcomes of cultural adaptation are illustrated in Figure 9.4 below.

**Figure 9.4 Cultural transformation in implementing cross-cultural INSET and other initiatives**



Footnote:

Adapted perceptions & practices suited to the indigenous settings in this particular study would include:

- a) Management of CPD initiatives: Accreditation of INSET programmes, flexibility of training, political and financial support of local government to project team and AEs and teachers, support of training providers to project team, support of AEs to teachers, communication & coordination between diverse levels;
- b) Project management: Democratic & centralized approaches; and
- c) Course delivery: Needs-centred, communicative teaching methods and Chinese approaches integrated.

Therefore, mutual adaptations were necessary to make imported innovations well suited to the local milieu. On the one hand, imported ideas and practices needed adaptation. A common view shared by participants from both sides was that there was a need for the external funders to reflect on the project approach to make it more suited to the local environment. This standpoint was based on the considerable incompatibility between the imported technology and the local context. A number of instances that occurred in Project A could illustrate this drawback. The well perceived ESP component was not welcomed by the trainees. The certification issue had considerably hindered the recruitment of the programmes due to external funders' inadequate knowledge of the prevalent perceptions and practice of CPD in the local context. The project management approach was considered by the project team as 'over-democratic' and at times 'inefficient'. The communicative teaching methods bore a conflict with existing educational perceptions and proved to be inappropriate.

On the other hand, local perceptions and practices also needed upgrading to meet the need of cultural integration and globalisation. Outdated assumptions needed to be replaced by up-to-date and beneficial beliefs. There emerged from this particular study a high endorsement of the imported perceptions and practices of CPD, communicative teaching methods, up-to-date teaching resources, team work in project management. These advantageous elements would contribute to the continuous development of these initiatives.

Therefore, cultural adaptation was a necessity in the collaborations between two sides at all stages to minimise cultural gaps. Areas of incongruence in perceptions of CPD, project management approaches and teaching needed to be adapted and well integrated in the local context.

## **Concluding Comments**

This chapter has sought to produce a conceptual framework from the investigation. It

highlights crucial factors for longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. Two aspects emerged as fundamental: role and actions at the micro, meso and macro levels, and cultural transformations. The conceptual framework generated from this study, has applicability to cross-cultural initiatives of various kinds in wider educational and cultural contexts. Interactions between relevant parties and cultural adaptation would be two fundamental issues to be addressed in all kinds of cross-cultural initiatives.

The next and the final chapter is concerned with conclusions and implications drawn from the findings of this research. The conclusions are intended to highlight overriding issues in more general terms concerning longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. The three-fold implications of the research - conceptual, methodological and practical - will be discussed in detail.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Conclusions and Implications**

The previous chapter has mapped out the conceptual framework that was derived from this study. The aim of this concluding chapter is to draw conclusions and their implications concerning longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives.

The conceptual, methodological and practical implications of the study aimed to contribute to the literature and the practices of managing and sustaining cross-cultural initiatives. This chapter consists of two parts. The first part provides a summary of substantive issues that emerged from this research, and thereby serves as a preliminary to the second part of the chapter, which concerns implications of the research findings in terms of concepts, methodology and practice. Limitations of the research are also examined.

#### **Summary of Substantive Issues Arising from the Study**

##### **1. Unpredictability and complexity of cross-cultural CPD initiatives**

An important, but easily overlooked finding which emerges from the study is the impression of change as a complex and continually evolving process, as was evident in the four chapters of data analyses (Chapters 5 to 8). The goals the projects aimed to pursue at the outset might become impractical or imprecise in relation to the local context. Adaptations, therefore, proved to be necessary to respond to changing circumstances including adjustment of orientations and strategies of management.

Similarly, there were indications of consequences that were unanticipated as well as unintended. As was shown in the four initiatives, it was not uncommon that gaps



could occur between desired outcomes and realised impact. It indicated that planning was important at the start of an initiative, but room for flexibility needed to be allowed for throughout the implementation process. Outcomes could be expected and predicted, but could not be prescribed and controlled.

Against this background of evolutionary change, sustainability emerged as a fundamental issue, but one which had hitherto been overlooked in the literature. It was highlighted that changes, whether be intended or unintended needed to be evaluated with regard to their suitability for the local context. A considered judgment of their worth was not contingent upon the absolute value of the outcomes, but upon how far they fitted in with the local system.

The findings, as we saw in Chapters 5 to 8, suggest adaptations as a potentially effective route to enhancing the long-term effect of the initiatives. Adaptations seemed to be able to serve two different but complementary purposes. The first was to retain advantageous elements of existing perceptions, practices and mechanisms as a solid foundation for longer-term development. The second was to discard inappropriate ingredients in new perceptions, practices and mechanisms for more vitality. This mutual adaptation process of integrating beneficial qualities from traditional and new systems, which was represented in Figure 9.4 in Chapter 9 (p. 255) was more likely to make the hybrid model more readily welcomed by the local participants and thus take root.

## 2. Strategies of change

The dynamic nature of change also had implications for the strategies employed to pursue project goals. As the findings indicated in Chapters 5 to 8, strategies adopted by all four projects were predominantly a top-down approach. This approach clearly enjoyed advantages. It turned out to be efficient at the input stage in reaching a superficial consensus about goals and providing physical resources, as was reflected in Projects A, B and D. But the limitations with the top-down strategy were also obvious. It was rather weak in the implementation process and outcome stages, as

was apparent in Projects A and C. The channels of communication were sometimes insufficiently exploited. Efforts could be dispersed on different foci due to differing perceptions of goals. Accountability was thus not always ensured because of over-rigid division between diverse parties concerned and the overarching decisive role of the macro level. This could in turn lead to inertia at the meso level and the de-motivation at the micro level.

It emerged from the study that the choice of strategies for CPD initiatives entailed a thorough consideration of the characteristics of the initiatives and participants involved, changing contingencies and stages of change throughout the implementation process. Ongoing monitoring of the operations of the initiatives was necessary. Timely alterations of strategies appeared to be needed in certain circumstances. Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that, in initiatives of this kind, integration of a top-down approach with other modes is generally likely to be more effective than an exclusive reliance on the top-down approach.

### 3. Models for INSET

Not only did the four initiatives share a common top-down approach, they also had adopted a college-based model. Similar to the top-down approach to innovations, the college-based model adopted by the four projects induced benefits as well as problems. The findings show that the benefits were generated firstly for the course providers, and secondly for clients. As far as the benefits for the course providers were concerned, the initiatives appeared to have considerably facilitated training institutions' development in staff expertise, physical resources and increased reputations. The project team members improved their professional competence, qualifications and career prospects. As for the impact on the clients, this model served as a means of providing the participants with theoretical input and guidance for their day-to-day work. The training delivered was systematic and up-to-date with the specialised knowledge and expertise of highly committed professionals and advanced resources and facilities. The target institutions had undergone a considerable change with new ideas and teaching methods their teachers brought

back. A considerable number of teachers had stood better career prospects with enhanced professional expertise and higher qualifications.

However, the weaknesses of the college-based approach were also evident in the data. It was found that common to all four projects, identification of objectives was based chiefly on sponsors' and course providers' assumptions about prospective clients' needs. The conduct of baseline studies and feasibility studies involved in the goal-setting did not appear to be as effective as hoped for because of its reliance on the meso level as a main source of information about needs and bypassing the grassroots level. Consequently it could not always precisely address institutional needs or individuals' needs from their perspectives. Moreover, it could not always synchronise development of both levels of needs. As a consequence, its impact was dissipated and confined to a small number of teachers from different institutions.

#### 4. Decisive factors: intrinsic, extrinsic factors and cultural adaptation

As was discussed in Chapter 9, this research has highlighted intrinsic and extrinsic factors along with a pervasive strand, cultural adaptation as three determinants for the longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. It would in turn imply that the presence of the positive influence of the two dimensions would enhance the viability of initiatives of such kind. Intrinsic factors involved seven conditions to be fulfilled at the project team level: course quality, team morale and expertise, project management, economic viability, resources and facilities, follow-up support to AEIs by the project team, and external communication with relevant parties by the project team. Extrinsic factors emerging from this present study entailed six external elements being in place: support from macro level to the project team, support from macro level to the AEIs and teachers, support from training providers to the project team, support from AEIs to teachers, AEI teachers' enthusiasm and motivation, and societal factors.

In essence intrinsic and extrinsic factors would require the effort of the grassroots at the project team level, the support from the meso and macro levels, communication

and coordination between the project team and levels beyond it, and cultural adaptation and integration.

## 5. Measures that might be taken to enhance longer-term sustainability

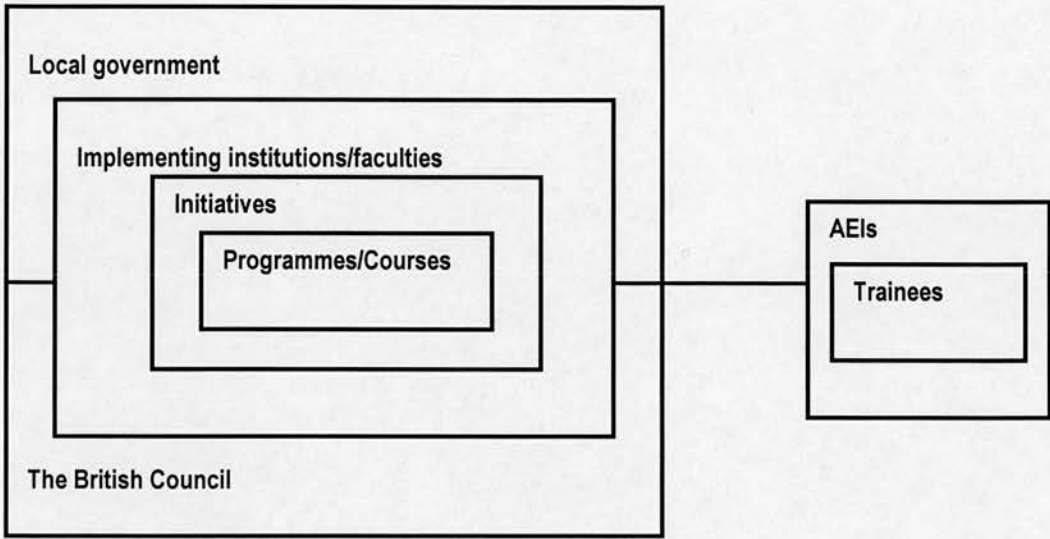
Two dimensions arose from the findings concerning ways forward to enhance the prospects of longer-term sustainability, as was shown in the second part of Chapter 9. The first dimension was related to roles and actions of all levels, which involved the internal effort of the immediate project implementers at the project team level, and external support of levels beyond the project team. The endeavours of the project team to further develop the programmes through a variety of means were highlighted as vitally important, for example, expanding and strengthening the team, enhancing project management and internal communication, consolidating the strengths of the programme, provision of various award-bearing teacher training programmes for a wider audience, undertaking research on ELT and teacher training.

External support emerged as a facilitating force, involving all departments involved in the initiatives. Local participating parties included the local government, the AEIs and implementing institutions; and external participants were the British sponsors. The support was perceived to be in the forms of public backing, funding and resource materials, which were seen as potentially beneficial to both the course providers (project team) and clients (teacher trainees). The support from each party needed to be sustained and ongoing.

These two dimensions needed to co-exist to create a higher likelihood of sustainability. While the internal effort was perceived as important, external support was considered as equally necessary in order to achieve momentum. The close relationship between these two dimensions in the process of implementing the initiatives is illustrated in Figure10 below.



**Figure 10 Exploiting internal and external efforts to enhance longer-term sustainability**



As Figure 10 suggests, the prospect of sustainability of these projects depended on the roles and actions at all levels. At the delivery end, it encompassed the effort of the project team, the support from multiple parties including two groups of sponsors, i.e. the local government and the British Council, and implementing institutions (training providers). At the receiving end, the enthusiasm of and support from AEIs and trainees were also necessary. The extent to which the project team could generate an impact was largely determined by the amount of support from and the concerted effort of relevant parties. Channels of communication needed to be maintained throughout the process. The internal effort made by the project team would in itself not be sufficient to secure sustainability. The synchronisation of the internal and external initiatives appeared to be crucially important. The interactions between these parties needed, it seemed, to be dynamic and recursive.

The second dimension of measures that might be taken emerging from the findings was related to cross-cultural communication and adaptation in various aspects, such as project management, course delivery, recruitment, and perceptions and practices of CPD. Cultural adaptability and synergy stood out as a must in the effort to make the initiatives take root. Critical analysis (Mok-Cheung, 2001) was considered as

necessary in adopting new ideas and practice. Inappropriate elements in both cultures needed to be adapted to make them more suited to the local context.

## **Implications**

The implications of this research are three-fold: conceptual, methodological and practical.

### **1. Conceptual implications**

Conceptually, the project's most significant outcomes are represented in the conceptual model articulated in the third part of the preceding chapter. Two inextricably intertwined dimensions of intrinsic and extrinsic factors and cultural adaptations were a product of particular concerns and foci of the research. Some elements in it may therefore reflect distinctive features of ELT projects, or even cultural factors in the region where the research was conducted. Taken as a whole, however, it is argued here that the model has some important implications for how the study of cross-cultural initiatives was significant. It is likely to be applicable to a wider range of contexts, whether or not concerned chiefly with ELT.

From a research perspective, the study serves to raise questions about some of the assumptions or observations expressed in the literature. It has not only corroborated some existing propositions, but also proposed new dimensions with regard to theories on CPD and management of change. Firstly, the research has supported some views in the literature, which were presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The research highlights the part played by the project team level. Team cultures and the role of project manager are of vital importance to sustain the project development. Additionally, follow-up support to the project team and to teachers is essential to enhance sustainability (e.g. Whitney, 1988). The research also supports the argument for going about CPD as an integral part of teachers' career (e.g. Guskey, 2000). Support to teachers entails attaching equal importance to and harmonising

institutional and individual development in the pursuit of CPD (e.g. Guskey, 2000; Bell and Day, 1991).

The study echoes the perception of change as a complex, uncertain and cyclical process (e.g. Fullan, 1982, 1991; Everard and Morris, 1990; Scott, 2000). Clarity of innovations is necessary for all parties (e.g. Fullan, 1991; Anley, 1993). For this purpose, communication and collaboration between diverse parties are particularly desirable. The local context of change needs to be taken into account and cultural adaptation is therefore necessary (e.g. Holliday, 1998; Markee, 1993). Considering the complexity of change context and process, a combination of different approaches and models may be more effective than relying on one approach (e.g. Trowler, et al., 2003; Guskey, 2000).

In addition, the research might contribute to the literature with a number of interesting findings. The following issues have marked differences from the existing conceptions or supplied new dimensions.

- The effort on the part of the project team emerged as one of the essential facilitating factors, as was in contrast with the literature which addressed it as a hindering factor.
- Cross-cultural communication between local project team members and expatriates stood out as a salient issue in project implementation, but has been neglected in the literature whose focus is on change of technological transformation.
- The context in which an initiative is introduced is an important consideration itself. Project approach encountered critiques concerning its inherent defects of overlooking the local context, involving intrinsic and extrinsic factors, for example, participants' needs, support mechanisms and cultural adaptations. This is a further step than the level of simply recognising these problematic areas. The root of these drawbacks has been pinpointed.
- Reasons pinpointed in the research findings for a number of drawbacks in the course of project implementation are culture-specific, and thus could be a contribution from a cultural perspective. For instance, the low recruitment as

one of the central problems, concerned a web of interlinked factors and a multiplicity of parties. It was connected with prior perceptions of CPD held by a spectrum of local participants in the society, cultural differences in perceptions and practices of CPD, the involvement, support of the diverse parties (meso level, macro level and external sponsors) and the collaborations between them.

- There exist two separate foci in the literature on management of CPD and change. The previously conducted research on CPD (e.g. Fullan, 1982, 1991; Hargreaves, 1997; Guskey, 2000) was predominantly limited to mono-cultural settings; and the previous studies undertaken on change and innovations were geared towards cross-cultural dimensions. The current research has incorporated the two major foci in investigating cross-cultural initiatives to enhance teachers' CPD in a specific cultural setting. Additionally it has highlighted tacit assumptions about training and CPD and their pervasiveness within this cultural setting, and the likely consequences they might lead to if unattended to.
- Although much research has been undertaken on the issue of sustainability in higher education and environmental education, it has been little researched in the light of cross-cultural INSET initiatives. This research would help to plug that gap with a focus on crucial factors for longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives in a local environment. It has revealed that roles and actions at three levels (micro, macro and meso levels) are crucially important factors, which corroborates Fullan et al's (2002) tri-level proposition. Moreover, it also underscores cross-cultural adaptations as a crucially important dimension. How the respective roles were fulfilled featured in the findings.

All in all, the findings would contribute to the literature on CPD and managing change with a fresh perspective on how prospects of longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural INSET initiatives might be enhanced. All the abovementioned features are unique in the specific research context, but could be important insights to be considered for educational researchers in this field. They can be regarded as



providing a sound and rigorous potential for further research. The findings do not merely offer descriptions of the conceptions identified. They also provide a framework that could be applied in other initiatives both within educational field and beyond.

## 2. Methodological implications

From a methodological point of view, adopting case study as the research design proved to have been fit for the purpose of conducting in-depth and detailed examinations despite its focus on a small number of initiatives. Since the overriding aim of this study was to understand influential factors for longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural initiatives through conducting an evaluation, it was sensitive to the researched real-life context in the scrutiny of multiple perspectives of insiders, the exploratory understanding, describing and interpreting what happened and insiders' perspectives on what worked for and what worked against the longer-term sustainability. Despite its focus on a specific context of innovation, it serves to illustrate more general use (Saunders, 2000). The evaluative purpose of the research was fulfilled by means of illuminating the process as well as the outcomes of the researched initiatives seen from a diversity of stakeholders.

It needs to be acknowledged that sometimes it was hard to avoid privileging some perspectives over others, for example, the study of Project A was much more detailed than that of the other three initiatives; and Project A trainers and trainees were given more weight than other groups of stakeholders in Project A. It was also notable that the informants displayed varying degrees of candour and openness, which might have given rise to information of varied depths and quantities.

Compromise between resources available and aspirations turned out to be inevitable, but at the same time also seemed to be a blessing in disguise. Originally the research placed its focus on one initiative, i.e. Project A. Subsequently three more projects were also investigated to respond to some unforeseen contingencies. There were some obvious advantages of this adoption of one core initiative and three ancillary

initiatives as supplementary. It has to a considerable extent widened the scope of the study and achieved richness and meticulousness of the investigation.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods has strengthened the validity of the data and the vigour of the research findings. Triangulated sources of information also added to more credibility and objectivity of the research by reaching some convergence of results. The conduct of fieldwork considerably contributed to understanding and interpretation of the real-life situation of the researched context, and helped data analysis and generating conclusions.

The limitations of the research need to be acknowledged. Its methodological limitations arose mainly from the lack of balance of focus placed on the four projects and perspectives of stakeholders, as was mentioned previously. Also, conceptually the research has pinpointed crucial factors concerning longer-term sustainability from a specific setting, therefore its generalisability is more qualitative than quantitative. The claims may not be wholly applicable to different projects in different cultural environments, although there might be considerable similarity between them in terms of fundamental issues germane to the longer-term sustainability of initiatives. The multiple factors identified, i.e. intrinsic and extrinsic factors that called for efforts on the part of the three levels - micro, meso and macro levels, their interactions, and cross-cultural adaptations, emerged as potentially effective measures, however, the level of the effectiveness of these recommendations is yet to be researched.

However, these limitations could create potentials for further research. It may be worth investigating how these measures could be exploited and possible new issues that would arise in synchronising the roles and collaborations of the diverse parties. A survey of a project much earlier in its life cycle would be desirable. Studies of initiatives beyond the ELT circle would be made possible.

### 3. Implications for practice

The problem of suggesting recommendations for practice as a result of this study again raises the issue of the generalisability of the results. How far they can be generalised to other initiatives is a matter for judgment. The implications for practice apply to a number of aspects: approaches to managing cross-cultural CPD initiatives, project management and language teaching.

This study suggests that the traditional focus of approaches to managing cross-cultural CPD initiatives on effectiveness or accountability rather than on sustainability within and beyond the period of project implementation merits reappraisal. It indicates that sustainability seems to be a more important issue than the instant effect of the initiatives, whether it be tangible or invisible. A long-term view may be more appropriate for policy makers. It has indicated that the effort put in the initiatives can be better justified if they can take root in the target environment. Their effort would prove to be more rewarding if their plans and contributions could bear perennial impacts. Therefore the study suggests it would be worthwhile to shift the focus of attention towards how to help the initiatives become well acclimatised to, firmly embedded in the local environment and evolve healthily and strongly, and further induce more fundamental changes.

The evaluation results might be insightful to interested professionals or institutions, including policy makers, course providers, change agents, researchers and educational institutions. They could be utilised by them and might be beneficial to them. The conceptual model might inform diverse levels of people of important considerations to be taken into account before starting an initiative.

This study has highlighted crucial factors influencing longer-term sustainability of cross-cultural initiatives in general terms and has also indicated that their degrees of importance varied at different stages. Some factors were important at the launch stage, some at the implementation stage, some at the sustainability stage, and some throughout the whole process. For example, the expertise of the project team stood

out as essential throughout the whole process, nevertheless, its importance at the sustainability stage appeared to be outweighed by external support. Likewise, cultural adaptation proved to be particularly important at the launch and implementation stages although it was necessary at all stages. They have provided precautions about each stage of innovations, which may be insightful to policy makers and innovation implementers.

Diversity of perspectives as a salient feature in the study suggests the need for constant dialogue between diverse parties concerned. Confusions and disparities in views on specific aspects of the initiatives appeared as one of the major disincentives. Limited communication between diverse groups of stakeholders caused confusion about project goals, resulting in disconcerted foci and efforts. It was also found that the parties seemed to have looked at problems from their own perspectives and rarely reflected on their own roles and actions. This in turn led to some barriers to coordination and collaboration. It suggests that more clarity could have been achieved with smoother communication between the participants. Each group might have been more proactive with more understanding and support from each other. More collaborations could have been carried out to implement, monitor and sustain the initiatives.

This research shows that the top-down approach to managing initiatives and college-based models of CPD were not without flaws. It indicates a need to regard teachers' CPD as an integral part of teachers' career and to make it well linked with their day-to-day teaching and their needs. For this purpose learning organisations (Senge, 1990) may be desirable to prioritise learning on an ongoing basis (Braham, 1995; Bartell, 2001). It also suggests a need to utilise a multiplicity of CPD approaches and strategies to fit in with the overall agenda of institutional and individual development. The process of pursuing and enhancing teachers' CPD is a never-ending developmental journey or process, not a final outcome or a particular destination point (Bartell, 2001). The institutions could fruitfully seek to institutionalise learning into its social fabric by defining and building an



infrastructure that fosters and supports learning (Hutchens, 1998). The increase of the intrinsic value of training might lead to more influence on teachers' teaching.

This study also suggests that top-down teacher training programmes need not be the only channel for teachers' CPD. Provision of various levels of training may be desirable. The models of training could be varied (school-based, school-focused or college-based; full-time or part-time; long-term or short-term), depending on the focus of training and a consideration of institutional needs and individual teachers' needs. Course providers' help as institutional consultants in school-focused CPD programmes would be highly beneficial. Their guidance might be more practical and more welcomed. Collegial collaborations could be exploited as useful means to enhance exchange of information between teachers and institutions. Professional associations could be set up as a forum for teachers to pursue self-directed professional development. In short, deliberate and organised CPD initiatives should be supplemented by various forms of bottom-up initiatives.

This study also suggests a need to integrate ongoing evaluation in cross-cultural INSET initiatives to enhance their sustainability. Evaluations would help monitor the development of these initiatives by pinpointing achievements and setbacks, and adjusting priorities when necessary. The participatory approach (Crossley and Holmes, 2001) might be an effective instrument by means of collaborations between researchers and insiders/stakeholders in the research process to identify collective problems, design and conduct studies. The main advantage consists in its acknowledgement of the importance of understanding the specific social, political and cultural context (Freire, 1982). The research findings have the potential to be more meaningful and helpful for policy-makers (Crossley and Vulliamy, 1997).

This research also yields useful implications for ELT. It would suggest that uncritical adoption of new methodology may be undesirable because new methods are not necessarily superior to traditional ones in all respects. New methods have their advantages, but traditional methods could also continue to have their place in a 'mixed economy'. In introducing new approaches, a critical attitude is necessary to

assess their appropriateness. An evolutionary fashion might be preferable to a revolutionary approach, i.e. integration of beneficial elements from new methods and traditional ones. Students' needs should be an important consideration.

Finally, cross-cultural communication permeated all aspects of project implementation as a remarkable issue. There arose from the study a host of examples of cultural difference in perceptions and practices of CPD, views on the nature of the initiatives and project implementation, approaches to project management, teaching beliefs and repertoires of teaching methods and techniques and ways of communication. This echoes the view of Crossley and Vulliamy (1997) that successful innovation depends on the generation of realistically grounded knowledge relating to specific social, political and cultural contexts. It suggests that cross-cultural communication competence is required for participants of both sides. Mutual appreciation and open discussions are generally more effective means than hostility and alienation to achieve smooth communication and collaborations; however, centralised approaches to management also play a part.

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## **Appendix 1    Data collection instruments for Project A at Phase 1**

- 1.1 Questionnaire for Project A team**
- 1.2 Questionnaire for Project A trainees**
- 1.3 Interview schedules for project A expatriates**
- 1.4 Interview schedules for local education management**
- 1.5 Interview schedules for Project A university administrators**
- 1.6 Interview schedules for Project A trainers**
- 1.7 Interview schedules for Project A ex-trainees**
- 1.8 Interview schedules for Project A current trainees**
- 1.9 Interview schedules for Project A prospective trainees**
- 1.10 Interview schedules for AEI administrators**



## 1.1 Questionnaire for the Project Team Working on Project A

This research aims to evaluate the impact of the Sino-British Adult Education ELT Project and its prospect of longer-term sustainability. The essential issues include its goals, its impact and expectations and experiences of trainers and trainees. I would like to invite you to answer the following questions.

Your answers are confidential and you are not required to put your name on the questionnaire. However, if you would like to see a copy of my findings, please put your name and address on the separate coloured sheet. I will ensure that I will send you a copy of my findings in due course. In the meantime thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

### 1 Background Information

Please put a tick in the boxes which are applicable to you. Write down answers where necessary.

Age: 25 or under ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50 or over ☐

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Title: Teaching assistant ☐ Lecturer ☐ Associate professor ☐ Professor ☐

Highest degree held: Three-year diploma ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐  
Postgraduate degree ☐ Other (Please specify):

Subject of highest degree:

English Language and Literature ☐ English for International Trade ☐

English for Tourism ☐ Linguistics for ELT ☐

Cultural studies ☐ Other (please specify):

Years of teaching English: 1-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-19 ☐ 20 and over ☐

Years of working on the project: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

Experience(s) of in-service training at home and/or abroad after you became a teacher:

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please indicate the dates, the place(s) in China and/or the country/countries in which you received your training.

Your responsibilities on the project:

Course(s) you teach on the project:

## 2 Expectations and Experiences

### 1) Expectations

**What made you decide to get involved in the project?**

There is a range of statements to indicate different expectations. Please put a tick in the box which represents your expectations.

√√ = strongly agree    √ = agree    ×× = strongly disagree    × = disagree  
 ? = unsure/don't know

	√√	√	××	×	?
I expected to improve my teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I expected to improve my English by working with British colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I expected to be able to use the up-to-date project resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I expected to get a chance to study abroad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I felt obliged to work on the project as one of my commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**To what extent have your expectations been met?** (Please tick the one answer that applies to you.)

I have been very satisfied with working on the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been fairly satisfied with working on the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have not been very satisfied with working on the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have not been satisfied with working on the project at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on how far the project has met your expectations?**

### 2) Benefits

**What are the aspects in which you have benefited most from working on the project?**

There is a range of statements to indicate different aspects of benefits. Please put a tick in the box which represents your opinions.

√√ = strongly agree    √ = agree    ×× = strongly disagree    × = disagree  
 ? = unsure/don't know

	√√	√	××	×	?
I have greatly enhanced my expertise as a teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have obtained more experience as a teacher trainer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have improved my research ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have developed my capacity to collaborate with my colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have exchanged ideas with a variety of professionals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on your benefits from working on the project?**

### 3) Working Experiences on the Project

In terms of your involvement in the project, how satisfying have you found the following features?

Please put a tick in the box which represents your opinions.

√√ = very satisfying    √ = satisfying    ×× = very unsatisfying    × = unsatisfying  
? = unsure/don't know

	√√	√	××	×	?
The workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of commitment required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The impact of the project so far	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial rewards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career prospects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities to extend my expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cohesion of the team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment and facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching mixed levels of students from a diversity of professional backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support from the authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course content and coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on your working experience on the project?

### 4) Features of the course in particular

What do you think of the balance of the three course components (language skills, teaching methodology and ESP)?

The weighting of the language training component was  
too much ☐    too little ☐    just right ☐

The weighting of teaching methodology component was  
too much ☐    too little ☐    just right ☐

The weighting of the ESP component was  
too much ☐    too little ☐    just right ☐

The three components were  
very well integrated ☐    fairly well integrated ☐    loosely connected ☐

The following presents a list of features with regard to five aspects of English teacher training courses in general. Which of these features did you find particularly distinctive to the project? Which features did you find particularly effective? Tick the box(es) which most closely represent(s) your opinions.

**H =high      M= moderate      L= low**

**i. Features in course design**

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Team-made course syllabi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learner-centredness in course design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching methodology as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESP as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language skills as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on the course design?**

**ii. Features in teaching methodology**

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
English as a main medium of instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A great deal of pair work and group work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plenty of opportunities for discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High level of student-teacher interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emphasis on developing integrated skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emphasis on designing meaningful tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on the teaching methodology?**

**iii. Features in course materials**

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Up-to-date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Based on British life and culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of graphs, pictures and other visual aids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of blend of local and imported textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Much use of handouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integration of skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focused on activities and tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Little inclusion of grammar knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on the course materials?**



#### iv. Features of course evaluations

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Regular course evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of trainees in course evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of feedback from the team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on the course evaluations?

#### V. Features of assessment

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
High priority given to testing problem-solving ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low priority given to testing memorization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on the assessment?

If you have any comments upon other aspects of the course which are particularly distinctive and effective, please feel free to write them down in the space provided below.

### 3 Impact of the Project

Below are a few questions concerning the impact of the project. Each question is followed by a range of statements to indicate different opinions. Please put a tick in the box to indicate your opinions about them.

√√ = strongly agree    √ = agree    ×× = strongly disagree    × = disagree  
? = unsure/don't know

In what ways has the project made an impact?

	√√	√	××	×	?
1. It has contributed significantly to teachers' professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. It has provided considerable resources and equipment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. It has contributed to the influence of Hubei University.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. It has raised administrators' awareness of the importance of teacher training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Other (please specify):					

Would you like to comment on any other aspects of the project's impact?

**What factors do you think have helped the project make an impact?**

	√√	√	xx	x	?
1 Its reputation as a course run by two governments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 The resources and equipment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 The connection of the course with degree programmes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Support at various levels (e.g. provincial, institutional)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 The highly committed and qualified team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 The need for qualified English teachers and ESP practitioners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Other factors (please specify):					

**Would you like to comment on any of these factors?**

**In what areas should the project make a greater impact than hitherto?**

	√√	√	xx	x	?
1 Staff development and team building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Resources development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Relevance of the training course to trainees' needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Recruitment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Other areas (please specify):					

**Would you like to comment on the areas of potential impact?**

**What local factors need to be taken into account for the project's long-term sustainability?**

	√√	√	xx	x	?
1 The levels of commitment required of the teachers who undertake the course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 The recognition given to the project team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 The encouragement and support given to the project team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Tension between project ideas and practices and prevailing ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 The morale of teachers in adult education institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 The current levels of teacher expertise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 The resources for language teaching in adult education institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 The current levels of support and encouragement given to adult education institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Other local factors (please specify):					

**Would you like to comment on any of these local factors?**

**What steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability?**

	√√	√	xx	x	?
1 Compromise between new methods and traditional ones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 More flexibility of approaches to delivering courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Continuing support from various levels to the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Follow-up support to trainees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Strengthening of the project team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Other steps (please specify):					

**Would you like to comment on any of these steps which are worthwhile to take?**

**Thank you for completing the questionnaire!**

## 1.2 Questionnaire for Teachers Taking Part in Project A

**This questionnaire is design for teachers taking part in the training course. If you are not a teacher, you do not need to fill in the questionnaire.**

This research aims to evaluate the impact of the Sino-British Adult Education ELT Project and its prospect of longer-term sustainability. The essential issues include its goals, its impact and expectations and experiences of trainers and trainees. I would like to invite you to answer the following questions.

Your answers are confidential and you are not required to put your name on the questionnaire. However, if you would like to see a copy of my findings, please put your name and address on the separate coloured sheet, I will ensure that I will send you a copy of my findings in due course. In the meantime thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

### 1 Background Information

**Please put a tick in the boxes which are applicable to you. Write down answers where necessary.**

Age: 25 or under ☐ 26-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50 or over ☐

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Highest degree held: Three-year diploma ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐  
Postgraduate degree ☐ Other (Please specify):

Subject of highest degree:

English Language and Literature ☐ English International Trade ☐  
English for Tourism ☐ Other (please specify):

How would you rate your current English proficiency?

Band 4 for non-English majors ☐ Band 6 for non-English majors ☐

Band 4 for English majors ☐ Band 8 for English majors ☐

Other (Please specify):

Years of teaching English: 1-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-19 ☐ 20 and over ☐

Title: Teaching assistant ☐ Lecturer ☐ Associate professor ☐ Professor ☐

Previous experience of attending courses, seminars, conferences and symposiums since you became a qualified teacher.

Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please specify in what forms you took them.

Type of institution you work as a teacher:

School ☐ Adult education institute ☐ National general university ☐  
Provincial general university ☐ Provincial vocational university ☐  
National vocational university ☐ Other (Please specify):



Province in which your institution is located:

Guangdong ☐ Hubei ☐ Hunan ☐ Other (Please specify):

Name of your institution (optional – you don't need to answer this question if you don't wish to.):

Name of your department (optional – you don't need to answer this question if you don't wish to.):

Course(s) you teach:

Syllabus(es) you normally follow (*Please tick more than one if appropriate*):

National unified syllabus ☐ Provincial unified syllabus ☐ Own syllabus ☐

English textbooks you use in your English teaching:

English levels of students (*Please tick more than one if applicable*):

Introductory ☐ intermediate ☐ advanced ☐

Medium of instruction in your English teaching:

English ☐ Mandarin ☐ Your dialect ☐

Mixture of English and Mandarin ☐ Mixture of English and your dialect ☐

The extent to which English is used as a medium of instruction in your classes:

Little/None ☐ Some/A great deal ☐ Exclusively ☐

Your participation in this training course: Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐

When did you take part in this training course:

Full-time: 1997-1998 ☐ 1998-1999 ☐ 1999-2000 ☐ 2000-2001 ☐ 2001-2002 ☐

Part-time: 2000 - present ☐ 2001- present ☐

How did you find about this training course? (*Please tick more than one if applicable*)

Own institution ☐ Friends ☐ Colleagues ☐ Newspapers ☐ TV talkshows ☐

Other (please specify):

## 2 Expectations and Experiences of the Course

### 1) Expectations

**What made you decide to take part in the course?**

Please put a tick in the box to indicate your opinions about them.

√√ = strongly agree    √ = agree    × × = strongly disagree    × = disagree

? = unsure / don't know

	√√	√	××	×	?
The good location of the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support from my institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The prestige of the course as a Sino-British joint venture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its connection with a degree programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My desire to improve my English proficiency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My desire to improve my teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Its potential help with my career prospects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The well qualified project team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The commitment and enthusiasm of the project team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The quality and range of the recourse materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My desire to improve my expertise in ESP specifically in *(Please tick more than one if applicable)*

tourism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	international trade.	<input type="checkbox"/>
science and technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	academic reading and writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify):			

**Which course topics most interested you?** *(Please tick more than one if applicable)*

Speaking in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listening in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESP training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELT methodology training.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify):	

**Did the course meet your general expectations?** *(Please tick one of the following that applies to you)*

The course exceeded my expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	The course fulfilled my expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course only partly met my expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The course didn't meet my expectations at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Are there any other comments you would like to make on your expectations of the course?**

## 2) Benefits

**What were the specific benefits of the course for you?**

Please put a tick in the box to indicate your opinions about them.

√√ = strongly agree    √ = agree    ×× = strongly disagree    × = disagree  
? = unsure / don't know

	√√	√	××	×	?
I have improved my English proficiency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have improved my teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It has helped my career prospects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify):					

I have improved my expertise in ESP specifically in *(You can choose more than one if applicable)*

tourism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	international trade.	<input type="checkbox"/>
science and technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	academic reading and writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3) Features of the Course in Particular

**What do you think of the balance of the three course components (language skills, teaching methodology and ESP)?**

The weighting of the language training component was

too much ☐      too little ☐      just right ☐

The weighting of teaching methodology component was

too much ☐      too little ☐      just right ☐

The weighting of the ESP component was

too much ☐      too little ☐      just right ☐

The three components were

very well integrated ☐      fairly well integrated ☐      loosely connected ☐

**The following presents a list of features with regard to five aspects of English teacher training courses in general. Which of these features did you find particularly distinctive to the project? Which features did you find particularly effective? Tick the box(es) which most closely represent(s) your opinions.**

H =high M= moderate L= low

#### i. Features in course design

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Team-made course syllabi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learner-centredness in course design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching methodology as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESP as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language skills as one focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on the course design?**

#### ii. Features in teaching methodology

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
English as a main medium of instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A great deal of pair work and group work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plenty of opportunities for discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High level of student-teacher interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emphasis on developing integrated skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emphasis on designing meaningful tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of fieldwork in some ESP courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there any comments you would like to make on the teaching methodology?**

### iii. Features in course materials

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Up-to-date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Based on British life and culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of graphs, pictures and other visual aids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blend of use of local and imported textbooks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Much use of handouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integration of skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focused on activities and tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Little inclusion of grammar knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on the course materials?

### iv. Features of course evaluations

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Regular course evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of trainees in course evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of feedback from the team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on the course evaluations?

### V. Features of assessment

	Distinctiveness			Effectiveness		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
High priority given to testing problem-solving ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low priority given to testing memorization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any comments you would like to make on the assessment?

If you have any comments upon other aspects of the course which are particularly distinctive and effective, please feel free to write them down in the space provided below.

Reviewing the effective features, what comments would you like to make on how they facilitated your learning on the course?

If you are still on the course, to what extent do you think you will apply what you are learning concerned with teaching methodologies and/or course ESP course design to your own teaching?

If you have finished the course and have come back to your own institution, what do you think of the extent to which you have been applying what you have learned to your own teaching?



## **1.3 Interview schedule for Project A expatriates**

### **a. Introduction**

You worked on the project for a couple of years. You witnessed the whole process of the project implementation as well as its impact. You also understand various problems arising from the project. I'd like you to talk about your observations from your perspective as a project coordinator (teaching advisor, project consultant) about a couple of substantive issues such as the goals of the project, the project implementation process, its impact and future development.

### **b. The project**

#### **1. Goals**

From your perspective, what goals was the project expected to achieve? What were the goals the British Council expected the training programme to achieve? How important were these goals for the British Council? What led to Hubei and Hubei University being selected to undertake the training programme?

Looking back on the process of the project implementation, were there any changes in the goals? How did these changes come about, do you think? What's your opinion of the effect of those changes?

#### **2. Experience**

Implementation of the project took various forms, e.g. staff development programme, delivering the training course, publicity and recruitment, etc. Which aspects of the project implementation were you most satisfied with? Which aspects, if any, were you much less satisfied with?

### **c. The one-year course in particular**

#### **3. Expectations**

What was the one-year course intended to develop in teachers from the British Council's perspective? What were the main things the teachers were expected to gain from taking part in the course?

What were your own expectations of the one-year course? What impact was it intended it make on teachers in the adult education institutions in Hubei Province?

#### **4. Course content**

What do you think were the focal areas the course intended to develop in the trainee teachers?

#### **5. Course features**

What were the most distinctive features of the course in your view?

How did you find the trainers respond to these features of

this course in your experience? Which aspects did they particularly welcome? Which aspects did they feel particularly challenging? How did their reactions change over time?

How did you find the trainees respond to these features of this course? (for example, which aspects did they particularly welcome; Which aspects did they feel particularly challenging; how did their reactions change over time?

#### **d. Impact to date**

##### **6. Most impact**

In what areas has the project made the most impact? What has helped the project to make an impact in those areas?

##### **7. Least impact**

In which areas has the project made the least impact? What factors have limited the impact in those areas, do you think? (e.g. policies and current institutional practices concerning in-service teacher training, prevailing teacher perceptions, resources, and expertise of various kinds)

#### **e. Longer-term sustainability**

##### **8. Prospect of sustainability**

I'd like to ask you about the prospects for the project's sustainability. The first question is: How positive are you about the sustainability of the project?

##### **9. Challenges**

What are the major challenges to the project's longer-term sustainability, for example, what obstacles will need to be overcome?

##### **10. Ways forward**

From your point of view what steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability?

#### **f. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up**

##### **11. Cross-cultural features**

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which factors have particularly contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?

##### **12. Other aspects/issues**

Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**

## **1.4 Interview schedule for Project A local education management**

### **a. Introduction**

#### **1. Transition**

The Sino-British Adult Education ELT Project has been undertaken in Hubei for over five years. I'd like you to know how you, as a member of the Hubei Education Commission, view its impact against its goals and its prospect of future development.

### **b. The project**

#### **2. Goals**

The project started as early as in 1997. From your perspective what goals did the Hubei Education Commission expect it to achieve?

How important were these goals for English teachers' professional development and English language teaching in Hubei?

Were there any changes of goals in response to the changing situations in the process of the project implementation? Why were the changes made? What is your view of the effect of those changes?

### **c. Impact to date**

#### **3. Most impact**

In which areas has the project made the most impact? What factors have helped the project to make an impact in those areas?

#### **4. Least impact**

In which areas has the project made the least impact? What factors have limited the impact in those areas, do you think?

### **d. Longer-term sustainability**

#### **5. Prospect of sustainability**

I'd like to ask you about the prospects for the project's sustainability. The first question is: How positive are you about the longer-term sustainability of the project?

#### **6. Challenges**

What are the major challenges to the project's longer-term sustainability, for example, what obstacles will need to be overcome?

#### **7. Ways forward**

From your point of view what steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability? What measures could be taken by the Hubei Education Commission to contribute to realising the goal?

### **e. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up**

#### **8. Cross-cultural features**

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which factors have particularly contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?

**9. Other aspects/  
issues**

Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would you like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**



## 1.5 Interview schedule for Project A university administrators

	<b>a. Introduction</b>
<b>1. Transition</b>	Hubei University and the Faculty of Foreign Studies are the major providers of the training course. Since 1997 five groups of AEI teachers as full-time trainees have received training. Two groups of secondary school teachers from Guangdong and Hunan are being trained part-time. I would like you to talk about your opinions about the project goals, the impact and the future development.
	<b>b. The project</b>
<b>2. Goals</b>	<p>What goals was the training programme expected to achieve? How were Hubei University and the Faculty of Foreign Studies expected to benefit from the project?</p> <p>Were there any changes of the goals in response to the changing situations in the process of the project implementation? What were the reasons for those changes? What is your view of the effect of those changes?</p>
	<b>c. Impact to date</b>
<b>3. Most impact</b>	In which areas has the project made the most impact? What has helped the project to make an impact in those areas?
<b>4. Least impact</b>	In which areas has the project made the least impact? What factors have limited the impact in those areas, do you think? (e.g. policies and current institutional practices concerning in-service teacher training, prevailing teacher perceptions, resources, and expertise of various kinds)
	<b>e. Longer-term sustainability</b>
<b>5. Prospect of sustainability</b>	I'd like to ask you about the prospects for the project's sustainability. The first question is: How positive are you about the sustainability of the project?
<b>6. Challenges</b>	What are the major challenges to the project's longer-term sustainability, for example, what obstacles will need to be overcome?
<b>7. Ways forward</b>	From your point of view what steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability? What measures could be taken by Hubei University and the Faculty of Foreign Studies to contribute to realising the goal?
	<b>f. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up</b>
<b>8. Cross-cultural features</b>	The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which

factors have particularly contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and have deserved more attention?

**9. Other aspects/  
issues**

Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**

## 1.6 Interview schedule for Project A trainers

- 1. Transition**
- a. Introduction**
- How long have you been working on the project? What is your role and responsibilities? I'd like you to talk about your views of the goals and the impact of the project. Also I'd like you to talk about your experiences of working on the project as a team member.
- 2. Goals**
- b. The project**
- What goals was the training programme expected to achieve, as you saw it?
- Were there any changes of the goals in response to the changing situations in the process of the project implementation?
- c. Expectations**
- 3. Your expectations**
- What made you decide to get involved in the project? What expectations did you have of the project? To what extent were your expectations met?
- d. Working experience on the project**
- 4. Working experience**
- How challenging have you found it to work on the project? What are the most challenging aspects? To what extent do you feel you have become used to working on the project?
- 5. Personal benefits**
- Which aspects of your working experience on the project have you found most beneficial? Which aspects were you less satisfied with?
- In the context of this project what are the key skills of an effective trainer? What has been your experience of trying to practise and develop those skills?
- e. The one-year course in particular**
- 6. Course content**
- What do you think were the focal areas the course intended to cover in its work with the trainees? What are the main areas of change in terms of the course content, if any, over the last five years especially since the Chinese side started to carry it on independently in 2000?
- 7. Course features**
- As a teacher trainer, which aspects of the course have you found particularly distinctive and which aspects have you found particularly effective? How familiar were you with them when you started teaching on the course?
- As a trainer, which aspects seemed important and good for your trainees? Which aspects did they find particularly challenging?
- What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the course, in terms of e.g. its course content, materials, teaching methodologies, assessment and course evaluation?

#### **f. Impact to date**

- 8. Most impact** In which areas has the project made the most impact? What factors have helped the project to make an impact in those areas?
- 9. Least impact** In which areas has the project made the least impact? What factors have limited the impact in those areas, do you think?

#### **g. Longer-term sustainability**

- 10. Prospect of sustainability** I'd like to ask you about the prospects for the project's sustainability. The first question is: How positive are you about the sustainability of the project?  
What do you think of the contributions of the British input? How have the course content and the project management changed (if at all) since the Chinese side resumed the project independently?
- 11. Challenges** What are the challenges to the project's longer-term sustainability, for example, what obstacles will need to be overcome?
- 12. Ways forward** What steps could be taken to enhance the impact of the project and ensure longer-term sustainability? What measures could be taken by Hubei University/the Faculty of Foreign Studies to contribute to realising the goal?

#### **h. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up**

- 13. Cross-cultural features** The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which factors have particularly contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?
- 14. Other aspects/issues** Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**



## 1.7 Interview schedule for Project A ex-trainees

### a. Introduction

#### 1. Transition

Which year did you come on the course?

You studied for one year on this training course. I would like to talk with you about your expectations and experience of the course. I would also like to hear your views of its impact and future development.

### b. Experience on the course

#### 2. Expectations

What made you decide to come on the course?

#### 3. Course content

What do you think were the focal areas the course intended to develop in the teacher trainees?

#### 4. Course features

Which aspects of the course did you find particularly distinctive and which aspects of the course did you find particularly effective? How familiar were you with them before you came on the course?

To what extent did they help your learning on the course? To what extent did they hinder your learning? Were there any aspects which you found particularly challenging?

#### 5. Strengths & Weaknesses of the course

In your view what were the main strengths and weaknesses of the course, e.g. in terms of its content, materials, teaching methodologies, assessment and course evaluation?

#### 6. Benefits from the course

What were the specific benefits of the course for you in particular?

### c. Experience after the course

#### 7. Challenges

What is your experience of trying to apply what you learned to your daily teaching practice? Have you found it difficult or easy? What are the major difficulties? Will you persist in your effort despite the difficulties?

### d. Longer-term sustainability

#### 8. Follow-up support

What particular support did you expect from the project since you came back to your own institution?

#### 9. Publicity

How strongly would you recommend the course to your colleagues and friends? What aspects would you especially recommend to them?

### f. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up

#### 10. Cross-cultural features

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which factors have particularly

contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?

**11. Other aspects/issues**

Are there any other aspects of the course, or issues relate to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**

## 1.8 Interview schedule for current Project A trainees

### a. Introduction

#### 1. Transition

You are studying on the training course. I would like you to talk about your expectations and experience of the course. I would also like to hear your views of its impact and future development.

### b. Experience on the course

#### 2. Expectations

What made you decide to come on the course?

#### 3. Course content

What do you think were the focal areas the course intended to develop in the teacher trainees?

#### 3. Course features

Which aspects of the course have you found particularly distinctive and which aspects have you found particularly effective? How familiar were you with them before you came on the course?

To what extent do they help your learning on the course? To what extent do they hinder your learning? Were there any aspects which you found particularly challenging?

#### 4. Strengths & Weaknesses of the course

In your view what are the main strengths and weaknesses of the course, e.g. in terms of its content, materials, teaching methodologies, assessment and course evaluation?

#### 5. Benefits from the course

What are the specific benefits of the course for you in particular?

### c. Longer-term sustainability

#### 6. Challenges

What do you think it would be like to apply what you have learned to your daily teaching practice? What, if any, do you foresee/anticipate are the major difficulties?

#### 7. Follow-up support

What particular support do you expect from the project after you come back to your own institution?

#### 8. Publicity

How strongly would you recommend the course to your colleagues and friends? What aspects would you especially recommend to them?

### d. Cross-cultural Collaboration and Take-up

#### 9. Cross-cultural features

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which features have particularly

contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?

**10. Other aspects/issues**

Are there any other aspects of the course, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**



## **1.9 Interview schedule for prospective trainees**

### **a. Introduction**

#### **1. Transition**

Which institution are you from? How many years have you been a teacher? What age groups are your students in?

You are going to start your one-year training on this training course. I would like to ask you a few questions about your expectations of the training course.

### **b. Expectations of the Course**

#### **2. Previous training**

Have you ever received training after you became a teacher? What benefits have you drawn from it?

#### **3. Expectations**

What course topics most interest you? What made you decide to come on this particular course?

What expectations do you have of the course in terms of its course content, teaching methodologies, materials? What other expectations (if any) do you have?

#### **4. Challenges**

What challenges do you think the course is likely to present?

#### **5. Institutional support**

What support, if any, do you get from your institution (e.g. time off, promotion, transport, etc.)

### **c. Cross-cultural Collaboration and Take-up**

#### **6. Cross-cultural features**

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. What implications do you think this might have (e.g. how might it differ from a more conventional training course?)

#### **7. Other aspects/issues**

Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**

## 1.10 Interview schedule for AEI administrators

### a. Introduction

#### 1. Transition

How many teachers have you sent to the training course?. I would like you to talk about your views about the goals of the project and its impact on the teachers from your institution. I would also like to hear your opinions about the future development of the project.

### b. This project

#### 2. Goals

When did you first know about this course? And how /from whom did you know about it? What did you perceive as the goals of the course?

How important were these goals for the English teachers' professional development and English language teaching in your institution?

### c. Changes to date

#### 3. Most welcomed changes

What were the changes (if any) in the teachers' teaching after they came back to your institution? Which of these changes were most warmly welcomed in your institution?

#### 4. Less welcomed changes

What were the changes which were less warmly welcomed in your institution? Why do you think they were not so warmly welcomed?

### d. Longer-term sustainability

#### 5. Challenges

What is your opinion about the future development of the project? Which factors do you think are especially important for the project to sustain?

#### 6. Institutional support

How are you able to encourage and support your teachers' participation in the course? What kinds of support are you able to offer, e.g. encouragement, time off, promotion, transport, etc.?

### c. Cross-cultural collaboration and take-up

#### 7. Cross-cultural features

The project is a Sino-British collaboration. To what extent do you think the project has been successful in introducing new ideas into the local culture and the collaboration of the two sides? Which features have particularly contributed to the collaboration? Which factors have particularly contributed to the take-up of the project ideas in Hubei and elsewhere? Which factors, if any, have proved somewhat problematic and deserve more attention?

**8. Other aspects/ issues**

Are there any other aspects of the project, or issues related to it, which you would like to comment on?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview.**

## Appendix 2 Interview schedule for Projects B, C and D at Phase 2

Introduction	As a participant in the project, you witnessed the whole process of the project implementation. You also understand various problems arising from the project. I'd like you to talk about your observations from your perspective about a couple of substantive issues such as the goals of the project, the areas of realised and unrealised impact and factors that had proven to be contributory and undermining to its sustainability.
Project goals	From your perspective, what goals was the project expected to achieve? What expectations did the trainees have? Were there any gaps between their expectations and project goals? Looking back, were there any changes in the goals? How did these changes come about, do you think? What's your opinion of the effect of those changes?
Project impact	<p>In what areas did the project make the most impact (e.g. individual teachers' professional development, institutional development and sector development, cross-cultural knowledge and competence) and how? Were there any areas of unintended impact? In what areas did it happen? What helped the project to make an impact in those areas (the team effort, the support from the government and institutions in policy and financial terms, communication and collaboration between various parties, cultural adaptations, etc.), and what effort did they make respectively and what effect did they generate? Which factors proved to be most crucial in the project implementation?</p> <p>In what areas did the project make the least impact (e.g. recruitment, change of teachers' behaviour and beliefs, etc.). What factors limited the impact in those areas, do you think? (e.g. lack of persistent effort by the team, poor quality of course delivery, insufficient institutional and government support to teachers and the team, communication and collaboration between various parties, cultural barriers existing at various levels, within the team, among different levels, degree issue, methodology of the project, etc.)</p>
Longer-term sustainability	What do you think were the major obstacles to the project's sustainability (e.g. recruitment, degree, damped motivation of the team, lack of support from the government, lack of institutional support, inappropriateness of some elements in project ideas and practices in relation to the local context)? How did the project cope with them? Which factors remained unresolved and undermined the project's sustainability? What measures do you think should have been taken to help it stand a higher chance of sustainability?

**Thank you for taking part in this interview!**



## Appendix 3

### Summaries of Stakeholders' Views about Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors and Cultural Adaptation

(‘+’ represents facilitating factors, ‘-’ represents hindering factors, ‘+’ & ‘-’ represents factors that have produced a positive impact and need to be further enhanced.)

#### 9.1 Stakeholders' Views about Intrinsic Factors

##### 9.1.1 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 1- course quality

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Distinctiveness and effectiveness of course features; integrating traditional and western methods (A) Certifications; varieties of training programmes; flexibility in recruitment (B) Communicative teaching methods; varieties of training programmes; flexibility in recruitment (D)	Certification (A)	Flexibility in enrolment, modes, lengths, etc. (A)
	Teacher trainees	English environment; communicative teaching methods; teacher-made syllabi; Learner-centredness; (A)	/	Flexibility in course delivery (A)
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	Teacher training-focused (A)	Enrolment; publicity (A)	More varieties of training programmes; more flexibility in course delivery (A)
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	Certification (A)	Flexibility in publicity and recruitment; more varieties of training programmes (A)
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	Irrelevancy of training, diversity of training (D)	/
	International agencies	Quality and relevance of training; course design, teaching methodology; friendly learner-tutor relationships (A) Relevant and timely (D)	Publicity; enrollment; accreditation; (A) Communication between trainers and trainees (D)	Degree programmes aligned with existing system; more varieties of training programmes; undertaking research (A)

### 9.1.2 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 2 - team morale and expertise

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Professionalism; expertise in teacher training and teaching (A) Commitment and expertise (B) Commitment and expertise; overseas training (C)	/	Adaptability; integrating traditional and western beliefs and practices (A) Team morale and expertise (D)
	Teacher trainees	Professionalism and qualifications	/	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	Expertise in teaching and teacher training; qualifications; applying western teaching methods; adapting to educational market; (A)	Developing research capacities (A)	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	Drawbacks in teaching (D)	/
	International agencies	Expertise in teacher training, teaching; experience in marketing (A)	/	/

### 9.1.3 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 3 - project management

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Staff development programme; overseas training (B) Team development (C)	Recruiting new members (A) Cultural differences (B) Breakdown of communication between local and expatriate participants; team development (D)	Staff development; creating a supportive and democratic environment; internal communication and collaboration; cross-cultural communication; role of project manager and enhancing cohesion (A)
	Teacher trainees	/		
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	Adopting western management approach; staff development. (A)	Team expansion (A)	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	Pitfalls in project management; team development (D)	/
	International agencies	Collaborative atmosphere; team work; staff development programme; role of project manager (A)	/	Cross-cultural communication (A)

### 9.1.4 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 4 - economic viability

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	/	Financial problems (A) Financial difficulties (B) Financial difficulties (D)	/
	Teacher trainees	/		/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	Financial difficulties (A)	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	/	/

### 9.1.5 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 5 - resources and facilities

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Resources and facilities (D)	/	Up-to-date resource materials and hi-tech facilities (A)
	Teacher trainees	Resources and facilities (A)	/	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	/	Upgrading resources and facilities (A)
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	/	/

### 9.1.6 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 6 - follow-up support to AEIs and teachers

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	/		
	Teacher trainees	/	Setting up network: English saloon, journal, website, hotline and emails; and help with practical problems (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	/	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	Workshops; extended programmes; lectures (A)
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	Provision of continued support to AEIs (A)	/

### 9.1.7 Stakeholders' views about intrinsic factor 7 – project team's external communication

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	/	Collaborations with overseas institutions (A)	Role of project manager (A)
	Teacher trainees	/	Collaborations with overseas institutions (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	Communication with outside world; collaborations with overseas institutions (A)	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	Establishing links with other training programmes; collaborations with overseas institutions (A)	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	/	Communication with other parties (A)



## 9.2 Stakeholders' Views about Extrinsic Factors

**Table 9.2.1 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 1 - support from sectoral level to project team**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Local government's marketing and recruitment; accreditation (B); Supportive policy; recruitment; resources and facilities (D)	Local government's publicity & recruitment; supportive policy; accreditation (A); Recruitment; certification (C); Training as mandatory; certification (D)	Local government's recognition of project team; financial support; resources and facilities; (A) International agencies: consultancy visits; (A) ; Ongoing evaluation (B); International agencies' financial support and involvement (D)
	Teacher trainees	/	International agencies' support in starting new joint degree programmes and local government's support in certification (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	International agencies: more teacher training initiatives (A)	Local government: Recognition of project team; accreditation & recruitment; financial support, (A)
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	Both parties: publicity (A)
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	Both parties' involvement, resources and facilities (D)	International agencies' follow-up visits	/
	International agencies	/	Follow-up visits to monitor and reinforce project development (D)	Both parties: trainer training, financial support (A)

**Table 9.2.2 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 2 - support from sectoral level to AEIs and teachers**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	/	Local government: recognition of part-time training experience and qualifications Both parties: provision of resources (A)	/
		/	/	/
	Teacher trainees	/	Certification (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	/	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	Local government: financial support to AEIs and teachers (A)	/

**Table 9.2.3 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 3 - support from training providers to project team**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Provision of training site, recognition of project team, financial reward (D)	Recognition of project team (B) Involvement; priority given to project team (C)	Mediating role, recognition of project team (A)
	Teacher trainees	/	/	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	/	Recognition of support, financial rewards (A)
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	Publicity (A)
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	Involvement and support; facilities and staff (D)	/	/
	International agencies	/	/	Liaison and link between project team and other parties; recruitment (A)

**Table 9.2.4 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 4 - Support from AEIs to teachers**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	/	Recognition of training experience; funding; promotion; release from duties; creating a supportive environment (A); Funding (B); funding (C)	Funding (D)
	Teacher trainees	/	Recognition of training experience; funding; promotion; release from duties; a supportive environment; opportunities for INSET; resources & facilities for teachers to apply new methods with (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	Recognition of training (A)	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	Supportive environment: Valuing both individual and institutional development; promoting project ideas; updating resources; creating opportunities for in-service training	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	Involvement and support (D)	/
	International agencies	/	Financial support (A)	/

**Table 9.2.5 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 5 - AEI teachers' enthusiasm and motivation**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Pressure for higher qualifications (B)	Personal concerns: funding, employment prospects, certification; prior beliefs; current levels of professional expertise. (A); funding (C)	/
	Teacher trainees	Interest in professional development, aspirations of improving English and teaching, pressure for higher qualifications for better career prospects (A)	/	Institutional environment: colleagues' and administrators' attitudes towards new ideas and methods (A)
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	/	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	/	/	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	Trainees' English proficiency (D)	/

**Table 9.2.6 Stakeholders' views about extrinsic factor 6 - societal factors**

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Demand for higher qualifications (B); Demand for English training (C);	Perceptions of vocational education and INSET (D)	National educational policy, perceptions about INSET; need for qualified English teachers. (A)
	Teacher trainees	/	Exam-oriented education system (A)	/
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	/	Severe competitions (A)	Recognition of adult education and reception to new teaching methods. (A)
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	Students' receptiveness to new methods; (A)	/	Recognition of part-time training and qualifications (A)
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	High demand for vocational education (D)	/	/
	International agencies	/	/	/



### 9.3 Stakeholders' views about cultural transformation

Stakeholders		Views		
Levels	Groups	+	-	+ & -
Micro	Project team	Degree programmes; flexibility in recruitment (B)  /	Notional differences, misunderstandings between local and expatriate participants; tensions between training system and testing system; culturally inappropriate elements of teaching methods (D)	Compromise between new and traditional methods; more flexibility of approaches to delivering courses (A) Certification & recruitment, adaptations in course delivery (C) Local needs in recruitment & course delivery (D)
	Teacher trainees	/	/	Integration of traditional and western methods; certification; flexibility in course delivery (A)
Meso	Training providers (Training institutions)	Adopting western teaching methodology and project management approach (A)	/	/
	Employers of trainees (AEIs)	Integration of western and traditional methods (A)	Certification (A)	/
Macro	Sectoral (local government)	/	/	/
	International agencies	/	Match between imported ideas and local context, project approach; perceptions on goals; coordination between relevant parties; relevance of programmes to clients' needs (A)	/